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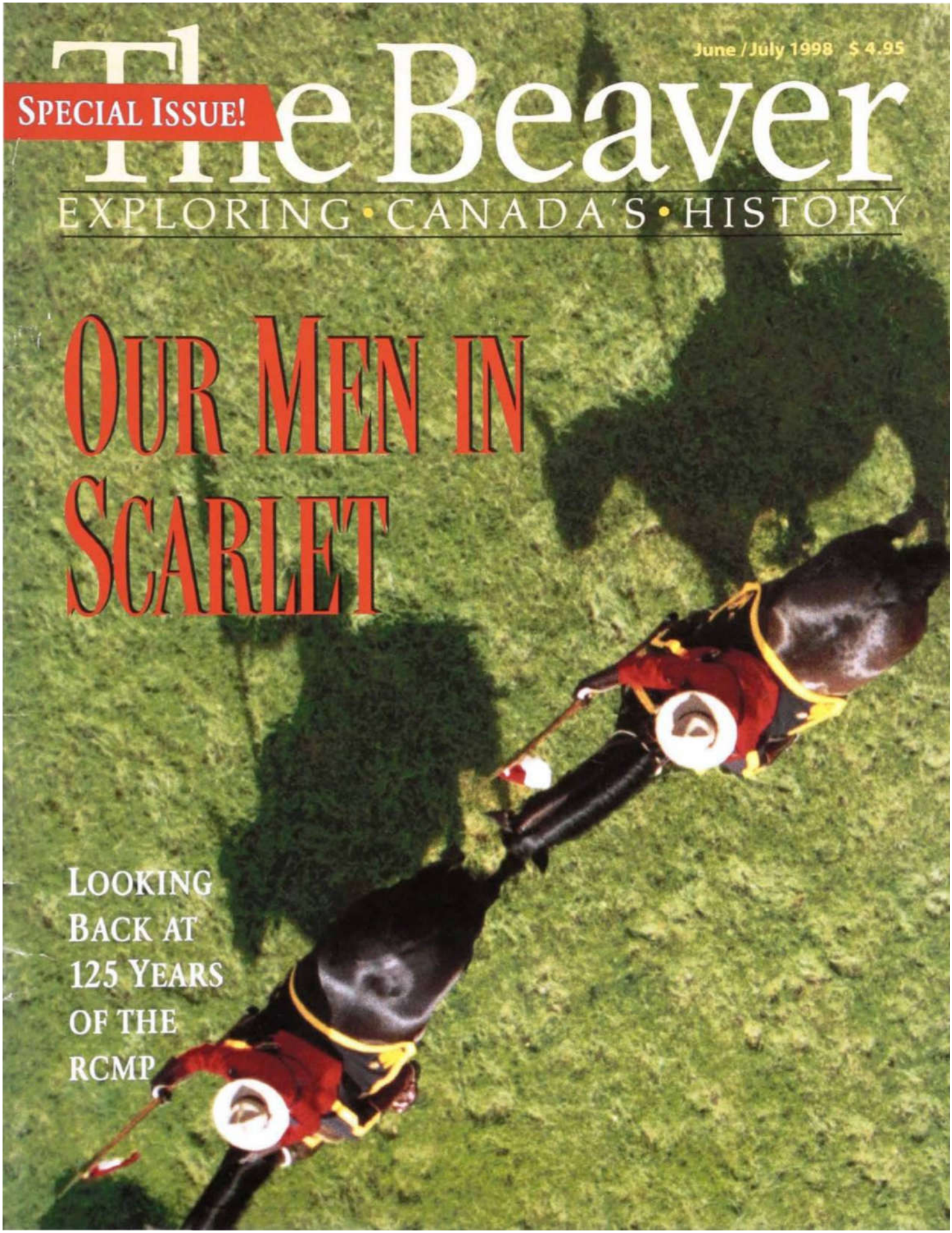

LOOKING BACK AT 125 YEARS OF THE RCMP

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Greg Marquis

One Hundred and Twenty-five Years of the RCMP Enigma

Canada's federal police, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, is one of the best-known law enforcement agencies in the world. The RCMP, though an enduring symbol of English-Canadian nationalism, is not a truly national institution; it provides no regular policing services in Quebec and Ontario. Although, or perhaps because, little is known about its daily operations, most Canadians continue to award the Force considerable legitimacy.

No Canadian institution is shrouded in as much myth. The RCMP reaction to its popular-culture image, cultivated through newspaper and magazine articles, adventure novels, radio, and motion pictures, and local histories, has been ambivalent. In the late 1960s, former Commissioner C.W. Harvison, reflecting on the large body of published work on the Force, concluded: "Fiction has outweighed fact and created an image of the RCMP that is closer to the Hollywood-style, Rose Marie kind of Mountie than the real thing."

Historically the Mounties are associated with the West, where conditions in the 1870s prompted the federal government to establish a paramilitary police along the lines of the Royal Irish Constabulary. Once the Prairies were under regular administration and white settlement advanced, the frontier constabulary would stand down.

The abortive Canadian mission to Red River in 1869, which touched off the Métis resistance under Riel, would have organized a police that was half Métis. Four years later Ottawa established a mounted police under Lieutenant-Colonel G.A. French, an Irish-born artillery officer. Despite popular misconceptions both then and now, a government constabulary was not without precedent in Canada: in the late 1830s the governor of Lower Canada had organized police in Montreal and Quebec and a rural force to control French-Canadian rebels.

In the summer of 1874, 300 North-West Mounted Police left Fort Dufferin, Manitoba for what is now southern Alberta. Because of the reputed popularity of British army uniforms amongst the region's First Nations, the police were issued scarlet tunics. The force, organized along the lines of a cavalry regiment, was equipped with rifles, pistols, and a number artillery field pieces.

The Laurier Liberals pledged to abolish the NWMP, but white settler society had other ideas.

The purpose of the Great March was to establish law and order and Canadian sovereignty on the southern plains. An American whisky trade with the Blackfoot and the massacre of a number of Assiniboine by whites had raised concerns back in Ottawa. The trek led to the founding of Fort Macleod, followed in 1875 by Forts Calgary and Walsh. The network of posts, supplemented by patrols, gradually spread over the North-West Territory (Saskatchewan and Alberta).

The colonial nature of the NWMP was underscored by its officer class, most of which was appointed on the basis of military, militia, and previous police experience, together with political connections. Commissioned officers, in a departure from the Canadian norm, were empowered as magistrates, able to examine and try minor offenses. Natives (as recognized under the Indian Act), although a majority of the population in most of the West until the 1890s, were rarely prosecuted by these tribunals.

The Mounties played an important role in the treaty process of the late 1870s and generally prepared the First Nations for the coming of large numbers of white settlers. Although criticized at the time for its performance during the 1885 Rebellion in Saskatchewan, the police, by its presence, probably kept hostile First Nations involvement to a minimum. For those who sympathize with Riel and the Plains Cree, the NWMP role in 1885 and its aftermath clashes with its reputation for fair play. The police were crucial not only to the treaties and their administration, they also were part of the overall legal and bureaucratic assault on First Nations culture. In the past two decades, scholars have begun to chip away at the purportedly honourable record of the Force in terms of the First Nations.

Following the rebellion, Commissioner L.W. Herchmer expanded the Force to 1,000. More criticisms came with increased settlement in the 1890s; "normal" Canadian society relied on local police, not a government constabulary, supported and controlled by local taxpayers. Police legitimacy was especially threatened by enforcement of the North-West Territory's liquor ordinance. In 1896 the Laurier Liberals pledged to abolish an institution they saw as an expensive Tory patronage machine. But white settler society had other ideas, and the Mounties survived. The police had made themselves too useful to ranchers, farmers, politicians, and the general population.

The Yukon gold rush of the late 1890s further ensured, at least temporarily, the survival of the NWMP. The influx of foreign miners and others into the Yukon threatened to compromise Canadian sovereignty and law and order. By 1899, a sizable portion of the NWMP was stationed in the Yukon, attempting to run the territory as a veritable police state.

By the early twentieth century, the Mounted Police added a new chapter to its already glamorized image by establishing posts and patrolling above the Arctic circle. The police, in effect, were the government in the Arctic.

The 1905 creation of Alberta and Saskatchewan should have spelled the end of the Force in the new provinces, but political elites negotiated contracts whereby the federal force served as a provincial police. World War I put new pressures on the Royal North-West Mounted Police, which withdrew from the provincial contracts in 1917.

More so than the Great March, the Winnipeg General Strike of 1919 was the defining moment in the Force's history. For historians of labour and the working class, the role of the Mounties in labour disputes, and in national security and intelligence, is an infamous chapter in our history. The latter was based on monitoring and at times harassing political radicals, pacifists, and progressive labour leaders.

In the aftermath of the strike, the government absorbed the Dominion Police, a small Federal force that had existed since the 1860s, into the RNWMP. Effective 1920, the Mounties became a national force, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, with its headquarters in Ottawa. Two of its key responsibilities were narcotics and national security and intelligence. The latter consisted chiefly of monitoring radicals with undercover operatives and informers and clipping newspaper accounts of socialist activities. One of the founding members of the Canadian Communist Party, formed in 1921, was an undercover Mounted Police officer.

A partial return to regular policing duties came in the late 1920s when the RCMP signed a provincial policing contract with Saskatchewan. The RCMP contracts were a good deal for cash-strapped provincial governments, and by the late 1930s Alberta, Manitoba, and the three Maritime provinces had hired the Mounties for rural law enforcement. Most of these duties revolved around liquor and traffic offenses. Under Commissioner Sir James MacBrien, the RCMP also took over the Preventive Service of the National Revenue Department. Like the American Federal Bureau of Investigation, the RCMP was a Depression success story.

More so than the Great March, the Winnipeg General Strike of 1919 was the defining moment in the Force's history.

World War II brought additional security duties to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. They assumed responsibility for policing most of rural Newfoundland when that province joined Confederation and in 1950 also absorbed the British Columbia Provincial Police.

The RCMP was simply too good a deal for the "have-not" provinces to resist; not only was this highly trained force subsidized by the federal treasury, it was forbidden from unionizing.

As R.C. Macleod notes, during the 1950s and early 60s, the Mounties were active but low-key cold warriors. Their monitoring of leftists and other alleged security threats would not become public knowledge until the late 1960s. Like most municipal police leaders and the American FBI, RCMP officers equated Communism with crime. A royal commission that reported in 1968 advised that security and intelligence duties be carried out by a civilian agency. The Liberal government decided not to act.

The revisionist *An Unauthorized History of the RCMP,* by Lorne and Caroline Brown, argues that the RCMP had "to a great extent written its own history." That official discourse, which dominated writing on the Force until the 1970s, neglected the more unsavoury aspects of the RCMP, such as harassment of "groups it considers dangerous to the country." In the 1960s and 1970s these included student groups, American draft evaders, disarmament activists, the National Farmers' Union, and Quebec separatists.

After nearly doubling in size during the 1960s, the RCMP continued to modernize, recruiting the first women to the Force in 1974, developing the Canadian Police Intelligence Centre (a national police computer system), and opening the Canadian Police College in Ottawa. Efforts were begun to increase the proportion of francophone recruits. By 1980 there were over 12,000 uniformed officers and several thousand additional RCMP employees.

Irregularities in Quebec during the 1970s led to the McDonald Commission on Security and Intelligence. Its 1981 report recommended that national security responsibilities be transferred to a nonpolice agency. The Canadian Security and Intelligence Service began operations in 1984.

One hundred and twenty-five years after its inception, the RCMP, although popular with the Canadian public, is an enigma. A "national" force, it is excluded from the English-Canadian heartland, Ontario. Because it is removed from the scrutiny of local politicians, and because the exact authority of provincial attorneys general in RCMP contract situations is unknown, the Mounted Police, in many ways, remains "The Silent Force." ◆

Greg Marquis, author of Policing Canada's Century: A History of the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police, *is working on a history of Canadian policing.*

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Lorne and Caroline Brown, *An Unauthorized History of the RCMP* (Toronto: Lewis and Samuel, 1973).

R.C. Macleod, *The North-West Mounted Police and Law Enforcement, 1873-1905* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1976).

Keith Walden, *Visions of Order: The Canadian Mounties in Symbol and Myth* (Toronto: Butterworths, 1982).

The First NWMP Trek: From Ottawa to the Stone Fort, 1873

by Merv Ahrens

Amid reports of uncontrolled lawlessness in Canada's newly acquired North-West Territories, a hastily recruited group of men set out from Ottawa in October 1873 to take law and order west. These men, the first officers of the North-West Mounted Police, had just one week to prepare. Inadequate supplies and bitter early-winter conditions made for a harrowing journey. The only known account of this inaugural passage was recorded by Major James Walsh, commanding officer of the advance contingent, in his journal.

Many Canadians are proudly preparing to celebrate the 125th anniversary of the formation of our world-famous Royal Canadian Mounted Police. In 1998 and 1999, a variety of events and reenactments will highlight the trials, tribulations, and triumphs of the first North-West Mounted Police (NWMP), who brought law and order to the West.

When Canada purchased the vast North-West Territories from the Hudson's Bay Company in 1870, Prime Minister John A. Macdonald knew that an organized force was needed to maintain law and order. However, due to the outbreak of rebellion in the Red River and other spending priorities, the organization was delayed. In the summer of 1873 reports of widespread lawlessness in the uncontrolled territory culminated in news of a terrible massacre of Assiniboine Indians in the Cypress Hills. Prime Minister Macdonald finally bent to the pleas of Canada's governor general, Lord Dufferin, and Lieutenant Governor Morris (the man responsible for Manitoba and the North-West Territories), following Morris's report of the situation.

On September 24, 1873, Macdonald announced the formation of the North-West Mounted Police. Newly commissioned officers signed up about one-half of the 300 required recruits, who would immediately be sent in plain clothes to the Stone Fort (Lower Fort Garry). No trip illustrator, fanfare, or media attention was focused on this preparatory step for the Force's Great March West from Manitoba to the foothills of the Rockies in the summer of 1874.

Hastily identified recruits and new acquisitions, some who later proved unsuitable for the Force, were assembled, and on October 1, 1873, the advance contingent of the new force left by rail from Ottawa to Collingwood. A daily log of the trip to Manitoba, via Collingwood and the Dawson Route, was recorded by Major James M.

Walsh, the commanding officer who later became one of the renowned early Mounties of the West.

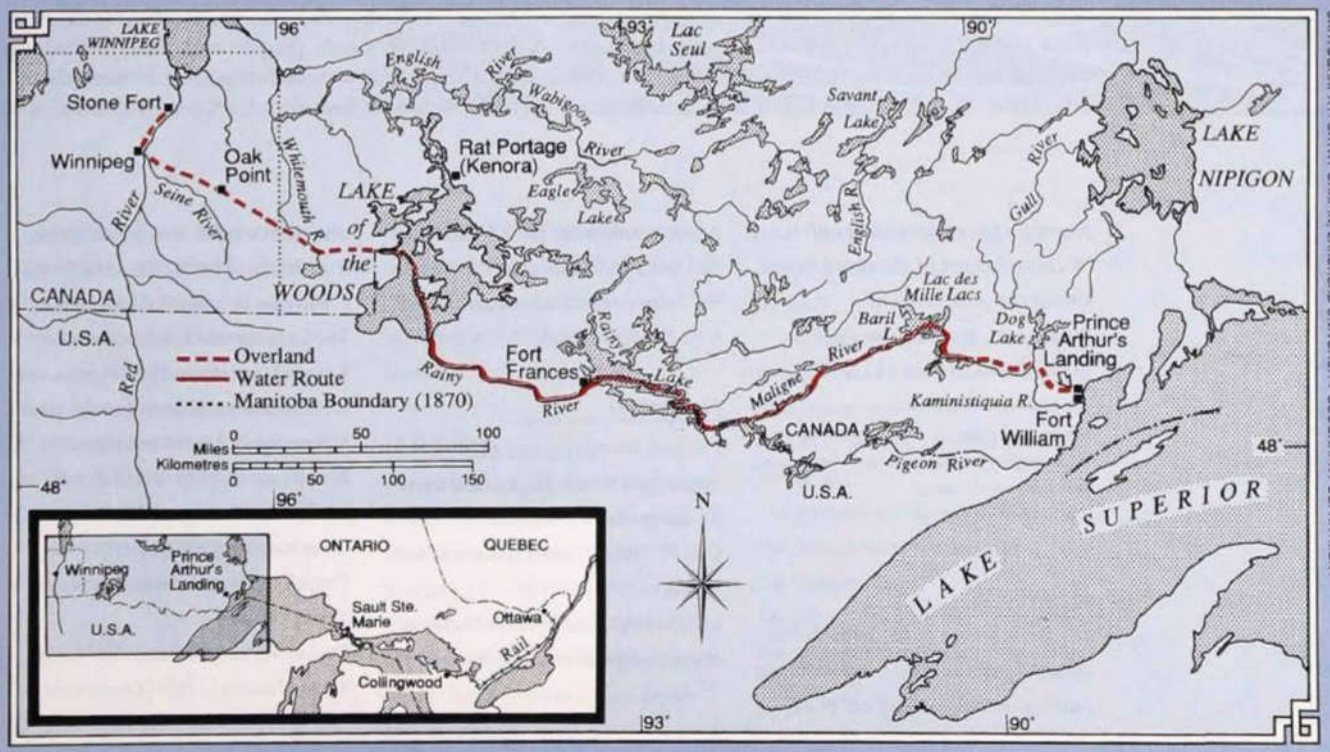
At Collingwood, on the southern shore of Georgian Bay, the military supply centre issued each recruit a haversack, greatcoat, two blankets, tin plate and mug, knife, fork and spoon, towel and soap, and an assortment of camp kettles, frying pans, circular tents, and chopping axes. Until the October 4 departure for their intermediate inland terminus on Thunder Bay via the steamer *Cumberland*, Walsh and the first 40 men ('A' Division) drilled, marched, and practised with their firearms. One of the men, John Todd, was wounded in a minor shooting accident. The second contingent of two officers and 62 men ('B' Division) started to assemble in Ottawa and later departed on the afternoon of October 10 from Collingwood, onboard the steamer *Chicora*. Later that day, after dark, the third group of three officers and 53 men ('C' Division) left Collingwood onboard the steamer *Frances Smith*. As they crossed Lake Superior, the latter group of men and 28 Canadian militiamen narrowly escaped a watery disaster brought upon them by a ferocious storm and a frequently inebriated captain.

GLENBOW ARCHIVES, CALGARY, CANADA NA-1771-1

Major James Walsh, one of the first officers of the NWMP, recorded the early travails of the first recruits as they made their way to Fort Garry in 1873. Walsh would later distinguish himself during his surveillance of Chief Sitting Bull and his people, who had crossed the border to Canada after the Battle of Little Big Horn and settled in southern Saskatchewan. Walsh, a firm and fair presence, is credited with the peaceful return of the American Sioux to their homeland in South Dakota.

After numerous scheduled stops and an uneventful five-day voyage along the scenic north shores of Lakes Huron and Superior, Walsh and his men disembarked at the wharf at Prince Arthur's Landing (now the city of Thunder Bay) during the early morning hours of October 8. At this landing, most of the Force would be at least 1,600 kilometres by rail and steamer from their homes. Before they reached their winter destination, however, they would have to traverse many more difficult kilometres

The Force's route between Prince Arthur's Landing and Lower Fort Garry was the Dawson Route, the most laborious, challenging, and



CARTOGRAPHY: CATHY CHAPIN, LAKEHEAD UNIVERSITY GEOGRAPHY DEPARTMENT

The journey of the North-West Mounted Police, 1873, west over the Dawson Route; Inset: the full route.

unpredictable 800-kilometre portion of the trip. It traversed a maze of forests, lakes, rivers, swamps, and difficult Precambrian terrain. For the most part, this amphibious route followed the old birchbark-canoe trail that for centuries was used by the natives and later the voyageurs of the great fur companies based in Montreal and London, England. Simon J. Dawson had surveyed this route in 1858, and in 1868, under his supervision, the Canadian government commenced developing it for immigrant settlers travelling west. During the Red River Expedition of 1870, the Canadian militia and British troops under the command of Colonel Wolseley helped extend roads and improve many sections. Other than the approximately 160 kilometres of primitive cart roads located at the east and west extremities, the route followed a network of interconnecting waterways. This was the era when the "highways" were rivers and lakes, and the Dawson Route, known as the "all-Canadian" route, was the main highway to Canada's vast Northwest.

In 1873, Dawson was superintendent responsible for improvements to the route. The assortment of widened portage trails, bridges, boats, wagons, and draft animals left behind by Wolseley's expedition together formed what was called the Emigrant Transport Service. It was a complex medley of conveyances. Almost all of the larger lakes were equipped with toylike tugs capable of towing several open boats, barges, and canoes. Rainy Lake and Lake of the Woods both had newly launched steamers, each measuring more than 30 metres in length. On some of the inland lakes and rivers, muscle-powered clinkers and caravels were available, guided by one or two voyageurs who had been hired for the season to pilot the boats through the difficult stretches of the Maligne River. Even birchbark canoes were used for the last three kilometres before Fort Frances. This distribution of equipment lessened the need to portage the boats and barges back and forth between the lakes.

Tiny, filthy, vermin-infested overnight stations, often separated by a day's travel, were constructed at some of the difficult portages. The station keepers were responsible for feeding and accommodating the travellers, sorting and forwarding the baggage over the portages by ox- or horsecarts, and tending the boats and teakettle-like tugs stationed nearby. Dawson bragged that "up to the middle of October [1873] when the stormy weather and shorter days led to some interruptions, passengers were sent in six days from Thunder Bay to the Northwest Angle of the Lake of the Woods (approximately 170 kilometres southeast of the Stone Fort)." After making the trip, few of the users of this transport service, and certainly not the NWMP recruits, would have agreed with his remarks.

Walsh's 'A' Division loaded their baggage and recently acquired food supplies onto the three-horse wagons that would, over the next two days, transport them by road from Prince Arthur's Landing to the stopping station on Lake Shebandowan. The last party of immigrants for the season, a family with a couple of teams of horses, travelled inland with the 'A' Division. Samuel Steele, one of the NWMP recruits already familiar with the trail from his earlier involvement in the 1870 Red River Expedition, commented that "they were very nice people and lucky in having us for their fellow-travellers to assist them along. Thus, within a month of its organization, the

Journal of the proceedings of 'A' Detachment of Mounted Police under the command of Major J. M. Walsh from the 1st to the 22nd October 1873.

Spelling, punctuation, and so on appear as in the original journal. Items within brackets were inserted for clarity.

[1 October]

The Detachment of Mounted Police consisting of one officer, one non-com [non-commissioned] officer & 32 privates proceeded from Ottawa by train at 9.30 P.M on the 1st October 1873 arriving at Prescott Junction at 1.10 Am 2nd instant.

[2 October]

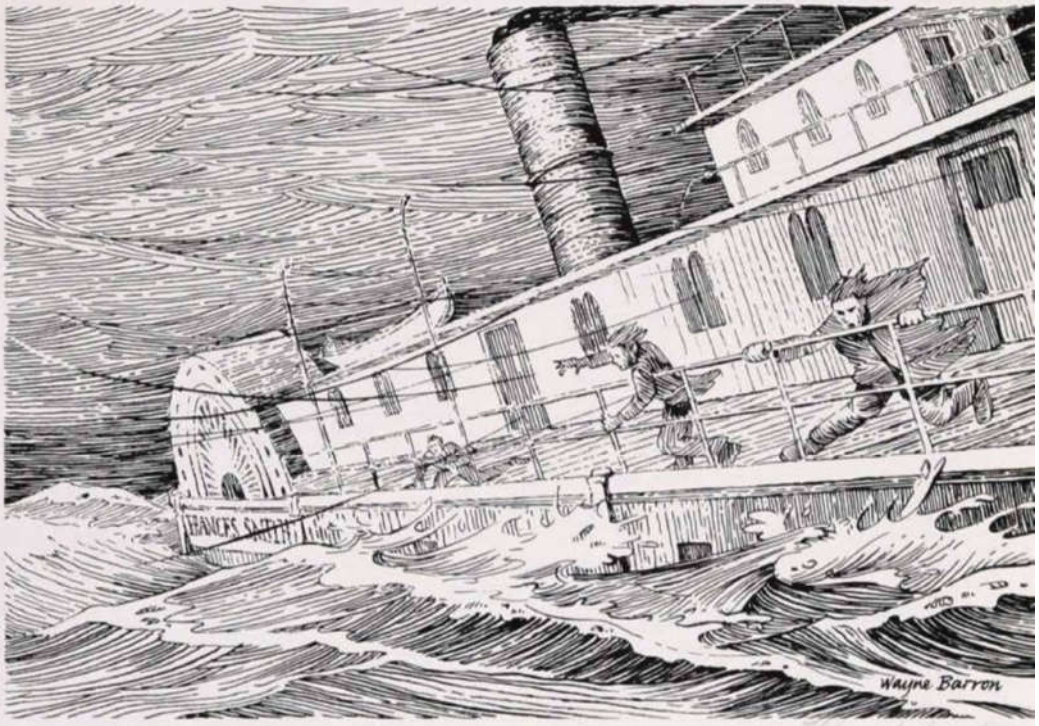
J. O'Neil, trumpeter was there discharged & sent back to Ottawa for being drunk & riotous.
One Pte Wm [Private William] Walsh joined.
Left Prescott Junction at 3.10 Am & arrived at Brockville at 4 Am where seven Ptes viz P. R. Neale S. B. Steele, R. E. Steele, G. M. Steele, J. Harding, C. Pulman & James E Rowe joined. The Detachment left Brockville at 4.30 Am and arrived at Kingston at 6.45 Am when the men breakfasted, proceeded at 7.5 Am arriving at Toronto at 1.10 P.M. dined & left for Collingwood at 4 P.M one Pte G. Nelson being absent.
The following order was issued during the day.
Ptes Lawrence Fortescue, Retd Lieut. Royal Marines Lt Infy [Lieutenant

NWMP began the work of assisting the immigrant to his destination."

Without the use of telegraph or other rapid communication, there was no way to notify the Lake Shebandowan crew of the police force's arrival. No steam-powered tug awaited the Mounted Police when they arrived at the lake. The contingent took advantage of the resulting one-day delay to work out the details of campfire cooking and messing, and for readying their gear, which would be loaded, unloaded, portaged, unpacked, repacked, and reloaded at least 20 times before their westward journey ended.

Some time had to be taken to learn the use of the voyageur-tested portaging "tumpline." George Dale, a militia man who headed west to Upper Fort Garry (modern day Winnipeg) by the same route in the spring of 1873, described the device: "This consisted of a strap or rope having a broad band fitting across the forehead, and the strap or rope passed under the load which could be carried on the back, the head band sharing the weight."

Eventually the Shebandowan steam tug arrived and the police and immigrant family prepared for the first of many typical departures on the lakes and rivers of the route. An assortment of baggage and people were assigned to moored barges and boats. In the case of Walsh's detachment, the horses were likely towed in a small barge at the rear of the motley flotilla. When the necessary fuel supply was onboard, the captain of the tug would sound the steam whistle, and the assorted interconnected vessels would slowly fall into line. An earlier immigrant wrote of the tranquil, moonlit beauty of a summer crossing of one of the lakes further to the west on the route: "The engineer put on all steam, the fresh fuel [seasoned firewood] causing a continual shower of sparks to



WAYNE BARRON

A violent nor'wester on Lake Superior threatened the passage of 'C' Division.

Light Infantry] & S. B. Steele late Sergt. [Sergeant] A Battery Dom[n] [Dominion] Artillery to act as non-com officers of the Detachment from this date. P[te] P. R. Neale late Serg[t] A Battery Dom[n] Artillery to act as 2[n] M[r] Serg[t] [2nd Master Sergeant] At Toronto L[t] Col[n] [Lieutenant Colonel] Richardson, Ottawa & Major McDonald Collingwood were communicated with by telegraph

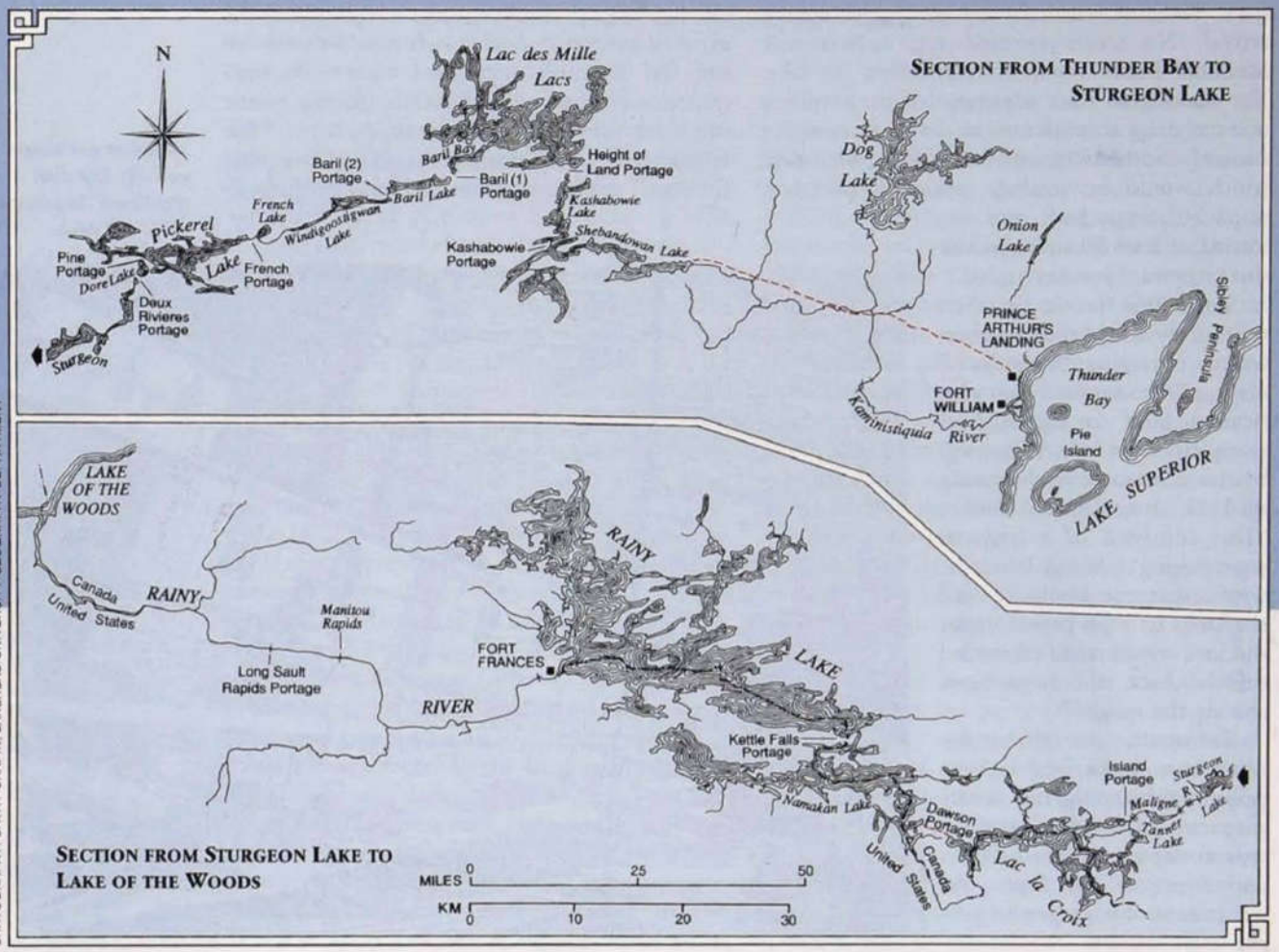
Arrived at Collingwood at 9.45 P.M where Major McDonald met the Detm. [Detachment] which was marched & billeted at the Railway Hotel.

[3 October]

On the morning of the 3[rd] P[te] J.Todd accidently shot himself in the fore-arm with his revolver while practising on the shore of the Lake
The detachment paraded at 9 Am after which they received great coats, towel, soap, tin plate & cup, knife, fork & spoon

P[te] William Walsh took the Oath of Allegiance before the Mayor (M[r] Moberly)
P[te] Nelson rejoined in the morning having come on from Toronto by the night train
On the afternoon blankets were served out.
The steamer not being ready to start the Detachment remained at Collingwood
The following memo was issued on the 3[rd] instant.

Details of the NWMP journey west, 1873



CARTOGRAPHY: CATHY CHAPIN, LAKEHEAD UNIVERSITY GEOGRAPHY DEPARTMENT

"The C. O. [Commissioned Officer] requests that the men will abstain from too free use of intoxicating liquors

While he is no advocate for totally abstaining still it will be his duty to report to the Commissioner on his arrival at Stone Fort any cases of drunkeness that may be brought before him

All having received certificates of good moral character they should bear in mind that if they abuse them, it reflects not only on themselves but also on their sources who vouched for them.

The C. O wishes it to be distinctly understood that this memo is intended more as a request than as a warning

The C. O hopes that in passing thro the country the men will bear in mind that this is not a mere volunteer military Force which has only to obey orders but that each man will be able at anytime to be called upon to Exercise his own judgment & trusts that by their conduct they will show themselves worthy of the trust placed in them

By order

[4 October]

On the morning of the 4th the detachment paraded at 9.30 Am & marched to the volunteer drill shed for squad drill returning at 11.45 dined, paraded again at 1 P.M & marched on board the Steamer Cumberland.

Left Collingwood at 3.20 P.M

The following Ptes were appointed to

play around, the moon shining upon the silvery lake. Passing alongside islands, and running narrows, in some places so narrow that the hindmost boat swings against the land, the entire scene was particularly weird and romantic."

The travellers' awareness of the pristine, autumn beauty of the wilderness and the joy of first viewing the great prairie panorama was dimmed by the stark realities of the route. The men were exposed to daily high temperatures around 3°C and nightly lows below freezing. Northwest winds, occasionally mixed with snow squalls, were frequent. The 'C' contingent suffered the most. They battled snowy conditions from Lake Shebandowan onward. Author John Turner noted, that by the time they reached the Northwest Angle of Lake of the Woods, a "furious blizzard set in. ... The thermometer dropped to below zero [-18°C]. ... The men wore sacking or other cloth material on their feet rather than risk wet and frozen boots." After many kilometres of travel across the partially frozen lakes and countryside, the early winter winds would have penetrated the inadequately clothed men and refrigerated their very souls.

All 20 of the portages along the route involved marches varying from between a few dozen metres to more than five kilometres. Sometimes these distances were traversed several times to complete the transfer of gear. The portage trails near the Arctic and Atlantic watershed (between Kashabowie Lake and Lac Des Milles Lacs in present-day Kashabowie Provincial Park) wove their way over steep terrain strewn with tree roots and frost-cracked, ice-age boulders. Other trails meandered through swamps of knee-deep mud. Often these low areas were traversed with "corduroy roads," built to make the approximate 100 kilometres of muskeg roads (including the Northwest Angle road to Upper Fort Garry) more passable. Peter O'Leary, an Irish immigration scout who crossed the Dawson route in 1874, described their construction: "A framework of trees laid on the

Teakettle tugs and open barges transported men and supplies down Rainy River.

act as corporals of the Detachment viz
Ptes T. McIlree
" R. E. Steele
" R. Killaly
A Guard was mounted & sentries posted to prevent the men from leaving the ship at the various ports

[5 to 8 October]

At Collingwood Lt Coln Richardson was communicated with by letter & telegraph

The Detachment arrived at Thunder Bay at 3.50 Am 8th October & landed at once, breakfasted at 6.45 Am started Baggage at 7. Am leaving themselves in waggons at 7.30 Am Arrived and dined at 16 Mile Shanty at 12.45
Proceeded at 1.15 P.M & arrived at Brown's Lane at 5 P.M.

9 October

Left Brown's Lane at 2 Am & arrived at Lake Shebandowan at 6 Am We were unable to proceed further on account of there being no steamer to enable them to connect.

10 October

Left Shebandowan at 6.30 Am arrived at Kashabowie Portage at 9.40 Am, crossed the portage (3/4 mile) & started on Kashabowie lake at 10.30 Am arriving at Heigth of Land Portage at 12 noon.
Crossed the Portage (1 3/4 miles) & started Lac des Milles Lac at 12.45.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF CANADA
P-80

Simon J. Dawson, surveyor and engineer, was charged with developing an all-Canadian route between Lake Superior and the Red River. The Dawson Route, as it came to be known, was used by the Red River Expedition of 1870, the first recruits of the NWMP in 1873, and many new immigrants to the West, before being displaced by the CPR in 1885.

marsh, there are first the supports running lengthways and parallel to each other about 15 or 16 feet [4.5 to 5 m] apart, and crossways on them are laid trees, side by side, the whole is then covered with earth where it is possible to get it." That same year, a contractor's report filed with the Department of Public Works stated that one corduroy portage road "was execrable and teams [of horses] sank down nearly to their bellies in the mud." The going was tough everywhere.

The standard victuals for the trip were salt pork, hard tack (sea biscuits), black tea, sugar, and dried apples for dessert. As the transport season was nearly over, these staples were in very short supply. The three main provisioning stations along the line – Prince Arthur's Landing, Fort Frances, and Northwest Angle – were in the final stages of being emptied and secured for the winter. Based on Dawson's recommendation, Walsh's detachment had planned for a six-day trek to the Northwest Angle; when it took more than 10 days, they were forced to stretch their meagre provisions. According to John Bray (later a sergeant-major with the Force), who made the trek with the 'C' contingent, "every morsel the cook left behind was well taken care of." He recollected that "a barrel of [dried] apples was found intact [at one of the stops]" and that his fellow recruits often returned "crestfallen" from their search for food and "had to resort to the barrel of dried apples." By the time the unexpected complement of the three divisions of NWMP and the detachment of the Canadian militia, 197 men in total, had made their way past these supply shanties, not an edible crumb remained. Wild rice and fish, bartered from the native families encountered along the route, helped to ease the bite of their hunger pains.

Passage down the more challenging rivers did not go without mishap. About a 15-kilometre stretch of the Maligne River (between Sturgeon and Tanner Lakes in present-day Quetico Provincial Park) was a turbulent, and as the name implies, dangerous section of water. To get through the four or five rocky, whitewater rapids, Walsh and his men were forced to lighten the boats by discharging some of the baggage and passengers. Those on land portaged the gear downstream, and the handling of each boat was taken over by two native guides. Often these fast-water experts were local voyageurs or those brought in from the Caughnawaga area near

Arrived at Baril Portage at 5.30 P.M
Crossed the portage (3/4 mile) & started on Baril Lake at 6.30 arriving at Baril Portage 8.45 P.M crossed the portage 1/2 mile & halted for the night.

11 October

Breakfasted at 6. Am
Left on Lake Windegooshean at 7 Am in open boats arriving at French Portage at 10 Am
Crossed the Portage (2 m) & started on Lake Kagoziwk at 12 noon arriving at Pine Portage at 2.45 P.M
Crossed the Portage (3 m) dined & started on Sturgeon Lake at 5.40 arriving at Sturgeon Portage at 10.30.
Pitched tents for first time and halted for the night.

12th October

Breakfasted 7.30 Am
Started across Sturgeon Portage at 8.50 Indians at first refused to row the boats on account of its being Sunday
Embarked on Meligne River 10.30 Am. & arrived at the Portage at 12.45 one boat having stuck at the Rapids on the way.
On account of the scarcity of boats one boat was portaged
Proceeded at 1.40 P.M & arrived at Island Portage at 3. P.M where the Detachment was detained for want of Steamer to connect.
Pitched Camp at 3.30 P.M.

13 October

Detained for want of steamer struck tents 10.30 Am

From Northwest Angle on Lake of the Woods, the Dawson Route continued overland to Fort Garry (Winnipeg), a mixture of jolting corduroy roads and rutted trails.

Montreal. Each descent was an awe-inspiring, adrenaline-pumping experience. O'Leary's shooting of the Maligne rapids "caused a terrible sensation, the most dexterous activity being requisite to keep the boat from striking one of the submerged rocks in the boiling vortex." George Grant's narrative of Sir Sandford Fleming's 1872 experience with these rapids described water which "breaks into curling, gleaming rolls which end off in white, boiling caldrons, ... shoots right down into the mad vortex; ... boils up at the side threatening to engulf [his canoe]." One of Walsh's boats did not rush "past the black mass, riding gallantly as a race horse" but instead struck destructively on one of the hidden igneous masses. Although considerable time and energy were used to skid a replacement craft overland, the accident did not result in any personal injury or loss of life.

As a result of the backbreaking portages and marches, the Mounted Police suffered from exposure to the elements, hunger, and exhaustion.

Steamer having arrived, left on Lake le Croix at 12.35 Am arriving at Nequachon Portage at 4.10 & pitched Camp.

14th Oct.

Struck Camp at 6.30 Am & started on Nequachon Lake at 7.35 Am arriving at Kettle Falls at 11.15 Am Left on Rainy River at 12 noon arriving at Fort Francis at 5.25. Crossed the Portage (2 m) & pitched camp at 7.30 P.M

15 October

Struck Tents at 6.30 Am & proceeded on Rainy River at 8.40 Am Arrived at the Long Sioux. 3. P.M Delayed on account of want of communication Pitched Camp. 3.20. P.M.

16 October

Delayed all day by want of communications until 9.30 P.M when the Steamer having arrived Struck Camp & proceeded on board

17 October

Left Long Sioux at 6. Am arriving at N. W Angle at 5.30 P.M While being conveyed from the steamer to the Angle in tow boats the Engineer in Charge of the steam tug cast the barges off & left for the shore. The Detachment was left adrift in the barge for 2 hours but assistance having arrived from the shore they arrived at the station at 9.45 P.M.

They spent most nights out under the stars or in tents rather than on the floors of the tiny, dingy hovels built for the immigrants. The damp ground, hard rocks, frigid temperatures, haversack pillows, and early-morning reveilles greatly reduced the sleep that the men had earned by strenuous exertion. Just as Colonel Wolseley, in 1871, had reminisced about his soldiers on the route, "the downy luxury of their distant homes" would have been greatly missed.

Because of the unseasonably late traffic over the line, Dawson's workmen concealed some of the remaining rations along the trail for themselves, since they were required to be on the job for an extra two weeks or more. About this time, the workers were also informed the government would not be hiring them next year. Bitterness and anger prevailed. At Northwest Angle, the tug's tow rope pulling Walsh's flotilla of men was intentionally disconnected by the sulky engineer, and the men were left stranded in open water for over two hours. Similar treatment of earlier travellers had prompted letters to the prime minister describing workers as "mean, surly, brute and monster." Dawson, travelling east from the Northwest Angle during the second week of October after assisting in treaty negotiations with the local natives, would have received few compliments had he met the irate workers and the exhausted police. In his 1873 year-end report to the government, Dawson related "that keeping the line open after the appointed time for closing it for the accommodation of the Police, and the consequent freezing in of the working force [260-plus men and draft animals] occasioned a large and unforeseen expenditure."

Interestingly, on their westward journey along the "all-Canadian" route, the officers and recruits passed, out of necessity, through American territory three times (first, at the U.S. locks at Sault Ste. Marie; second, on the Kettle Falls portage trail connected to Rainy Lake; and finally, at the landing and provisioning centre at Northwest Angle, Minnesota).

With the exception of John Todd, the man wounded at Collingwood, the policemen in all three divisions emerged unscathed onto the prairies. With the rush to beat being frozen in along the route, there was no time to follow the traditions of the early voyageurs; no lob (pole) pines were trimmed and christened to mark the police officers' passing for future travellers. When they crossed the Arctic and Atlantic watershed, there were no initiation rites, gunshots, or hearty toasts of old. However, the life-threatening experiences along the unpredictable Dawson Route did etch unforgettable memories, patience, perseverance, and victory in officers and recruits alike.

On October 22, Walsh left Todd at the Fort Garry hospital to receive much-needed medical attention for his gunshot wound. By November 1, 'C' Division, the last of the Force's three contingents, finally crossed the Red River and continued another 20 kilometres north along its banks to Lower Fort Garry. Lieutenant-Colonel Osborne Smith, on November 3, 1873, administered the enlistment oath; each recruit received a warrant with his name and rank. It was on this day that Canada's famous North-West Mounted Police truly came into being. ◆

Merv Ahrens, a teacher and history enthusiast, lives in Northwest Ontario. *He acknowledges, with thanks, the assistance of Barry Hyman of the Manitoba Archives.*

18th October

Started to March to 30 Mile Shanty at 9.45 Am. baggage following in 3 waggons & 4 Bullock Carts. At midday left Baggage Guard consisting of 1 Act Corpl [Acting Corporal] & 4 Ptes to bring up the Baggage
Arrived at Birch River at 7. P.M.

19th October

Delayed on account of the non-arrival of the Baggage train.
The men were unable to March further on account of the condition of their boots
Baggage arrived at 5 P.M.
Left behind Baggage Guard of 1 Corpl & 6 privates
Remainder proceeded in 5 waggons and arrived at White Mouth River at 7 P.M

20 October

Left White Mouth River at 6 Am in 5 waggons arriving at Oak Point at 4 P.M.
Sent letter to Coln Smith reporting arrival & received order from him to proceed next day to the Seine River

21 October

Left Oak Point at 6.30 Am & arrived at Seine River at 3.20 P.M & pitched Camp
Communicated arrival to Coln Smith.

22nd October

Embarked on the Red River at 11 Am
Private Todd being left behind and sent to Hospital at Fort Garry for medical treatment.
Arrived at Stone Fort at 4 P.M.

FRANCIS J. DICKENS

Profile of an Officer

by Vic Parsons

One of the first officers of the newly formed North-West Mounted Police, Francis Dickens, son of novelist Charles Dickens, was noted for his famous parentage, if not much else. Though sometimes judged a mediocre officer, Dickens was typical of many early Mountie recruits. Thrown into unstable situations with few resources, little direction, and lots of cultural baggage, these ordinary men nevertheless rose to the challenges that faced them.

When Louis Riel led the rebellion in Canada's West in the spring of 1885, the inhabitants of Battleford were panic-stricken. Parts of their village had been looted and burned. Defeat of the North-West Mounted Police and volunteers by the Métis at Duck Lake and word of murders at Frog Lake prompted 500 local settlers to cram into the comparative safety of the police stockade.

Up the North Saskatchewan River another 160 kilometres, the Hudson's Bay Company post of Fort Pitt was an

GLENBOW ARCHIVES, CALGARY, CANADA / NA-2829-1

Officer Francis Dickens, second from the right, appears in this first known photograph of the North-West Mounted Police taken in 1874.

R-34

obvious target for attack. Inspector Francis J. Dickens, son of the famous author, commanded the 24-man police detachment there. He begged Inspector William Morris, his colleague at Battleford, for assistance.

Fort Pitt was no military installation. It was open and exposed, vulnerable to fire, and the closest water supply was the river 365 metres away. Later assessments suggested 200 well-armed troops would have been needed to defend Pitt against warriors under Cree war chief Wandering Spirit, who appeared on the nearby hills in mid-April. Police and civilians together–men, women, and children–totalled fewer than 70.

Outnumbered and surrounded, Dickens could expect no help from Morris, who feared weakening his own defences. Morris suggested the police and civilians abandon Pitt and make their way to Battleford. However, Dickens dreaded the consequences of being caught in the open.

When scouts were dispatched from Battleford on April 18, they returned with devastating news. Pitt had been taken and burned. A slaughter was feared. But on April 21, the escaped police were spotted upstream.

When Dickens and his men arrived at Battleford the next day, the welcome was one reserved for conquering heroes. A band played martial music and a feast was prepared as the exhausted police landed their battered scow after a perilous six-day voyage fending off threatening ice floes and raging river waters.

For Dickens, the trip was to be the final field service in a 12-year career with the police. Never physically strong, Dickens's health would be ruined by the ordeal.

Canadian propagandists of the day turned retreat into victory. Charles Pelham Mulvaney, in *The North West Rebellion of 1885*, portrayed Dickens as "one of the coolest and most intrepid soldiers" in the West, calmly puffing on his pipe as he sniped at Cree marauders. "No more heroic fight or successful defence in the face of overwhelming odds illumines the pages of modern history," Mulvaney proclaimed.

More sobering judgments later chastised Dickens's abandonment of the fort as "humiliating," even though defending the indefensible post would surely have cost scores of lives, both native and white.

Dickens personally exemplified many of the problems of the NWMP at that time. He had been hired through political pull, knew virtually nothing of Canada, was too fond of a tip of the bottle, and was of questionable health and capacity. Despite these shortcomings, he was placed in positions of greater responsibility because more capable officers had left for brighter opportunities rather than endure the poor pay, inadequate supplies, and intolerable working and living conditions that faced the first Mounties.

Former policemen found other occupations, from ranching to running bars, to be more rewarding. They had been frustrated by the repeated failure of Ottawa bureaucrats to address the need for more troops and supplies. But while others gave up, Dickens stayed.

So how did a son of Charles Dickens wind up in the Canadian West?

Frank, as he was commonly known, was born in early 1844. Charles first saw the youngster as the brightest of his 10 children, and Frank was most like his father in "face, gesture and manner." As the boy grew older, however, Charles despaired of his son's competence.

Life in the Dickens household was not easy. There were happy times, but Charles was often harshly critical of the children. The author was especially mystified by Frank's severe stammering, describing the boy as "an afflicted spirit." Trying to correct the problem, he and the lad would read literary passages aloud, the father admonishing his son to recite slowly and distinctly.

Frank wanted to be a doctor, but concluded his stammer would not allow him to succeed. From boarding school, he wrote his father to ask that he be given 15 pounds sterling, a gun, and horse, all that he needed to become a gentleman farmer in the colonies.

Charles' reply was scathing: "I perceived that the first consequence of the fifteen pounds was that he would be robbed of it–of the horse, that it would throw him–and of the rifle, that it would blow his head off," he wrote to a friend.

Instead, Charles hired Frank at his magazine, *All the Year Round*. "If I am not mistaken, he has a natural literary taste and capacity, and may do well with a chance so congenial to his mind," Charles enthused. But Frank was a flop in the office, and when he also failed the British Foreign Office exams, Charles negotiated a post in the Bengal Mounted Police. In December 1863, Frank left for India, not returning until 1871, after his father's death.

Frank's misadventures continued. Back in England, he overstayed his leave and lost his officer's commission. His inheritance was squandered on poor investments and dissipated living. One of the few items he kept was his father's gold watch, left to him because of Charles's concern over the son's lack of punctuality.

A political favour rescued Frank from his disgrace. Lord Dufferin, the new governor general in Canada, was a family friend and great admirer of

Charles. The Canadian government was setting up a police force to patrol newly acquired western lands. A word in the appropriate ear, perhaps?

Connections were often the quickest route to officers' postings in the early force. Edmund Dalrymple Clark, nephew to Sir John A. Macdonald, would become paymaster. William Herchmer, later a commissioner, was the son of a close friend of Sir John's in Kingston, Ontario.

Dickens, taken on as a sub-inspector late in 1874, soon fell afoul of his superiors. He was late getting to the West, and then brazenly claimed extra expenses incurred in his scramble to catch up. When a stern letter arrived from the justice minister's office, he tersely brushed it off. The incident left bureaucrats spluttering.

A constant complaint in the Force was that the regulation saddles were uncomfortable and inadequate, while clothing was unsuitable for the extreme climate. Some griped; Dickens acted. He ordered saddles and coats from London for himself and two colleagues. When the gear arrived, customs imposed duty. Dickens challenged the tax, arguing that the equipment was being used on government service. The lengthy fight was settled in his favour, just after Dickens had to undergo his first assessment as an officer.

In a third incident, Dickens was caught red-handed, attempting to have brandy mailed to him at the Swan River headquarters in Manitoba, by Commissioner George French. This violated French's strict rules. Dickens was not alone in his desire for forbidden waters. A mandate of the Force was to stop the liquor trade, but the police, no saints, were as likely to imbibe as those they policed. Confiscated alcohol inexplicably disappeared. Constables and officers repeatedly tasted contraband wares to prove to their satisfaction that the fluids they seized were indeed whisky.

Early on, then, Dickens may have established himself as a troublemaker. Certainly, he suffered in that first assessment by Major-General Edward Selby Smyth in 1875. Smyth was not impressed overall by the Force's officers; there were too many "decayed gentlemen." Turning to Dickens, Smyth described him as "a very poor officer of no promise. Physically weak in constitution, his habits not affording good example." Later, Commissioner A.G. Irvine called Dickens lazy, with no interest in his work. "I am of opinion that his brain is slightly effected [*sic*]." Only his final evaluation in 1885 was remotely positive when it noted that he was "much more steady in his habits." Even that was a kiss of death: the next line pointed out that he was "very deaf." Dickens' fate was sealed.

If Dickens's personal inadequacies were so obvious, why was he placed in posts of increasing responsibility? The answer is that, for politicians, once the Force had gone West it was out of sight, out of mind. Meagre pay and neglect resulted in shortages of men. Even poorly regarded officers were needed on field duty. So Dickens was sent to lead detachments in two sensitive areas. The first was at Blackfoot Crossing.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF CANADA / PA-42139

A. G. Irving, commissioner of the Force from 1880 to 1886, had little praise for Dickens.

The winter of 1881–82 was perhaps the most tense period in relations between the Blackfoot and Canadian authorities. With the disappearance of the buffalo, starvation had reduced the proud warriors and hunters to begging. The atmosphere was poisoned between Indians and government agents, who did little to alleviate the evident suffering. When an angry minor chief, Bull Elk, fired shots in the direction of government contractors, Dickens arrested him. Furious, armed warriors prevented him from taking the prisoner to Fort Macleod for trial. Having little choice, Dickens agreed to place the offender in the custody of paramount Blackfoot chief Crowfoot until a magistrate arrived.

When his superior, Superintendent Leif Crozier, learned of the incident, he saddled up, rode to the crossing, built fortifications, and rearrested Bull Elk. His bold but provocative action was a legend-creating moment for the Mounties. But it also broke the deal between Dickens and Crowfoot. Dickens has been blamed for the worsening relations between the two sides. But in retrospect, Dickens's face-saving, commonsense deal with Crowfoot had restored temporary peace and might have been a better path than the bellicose course chosen by Crozier.

In mid-1883, Dickens was reassigned to Fort

OTTO B. BUELL /NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF CANADA / C-1873

Big Bear, chief of the Plains Cree, considered Dickens a fair man. Because of this, the Cree promised the inhabitants of Fort Pitt a safe retreat in return for their surrender.

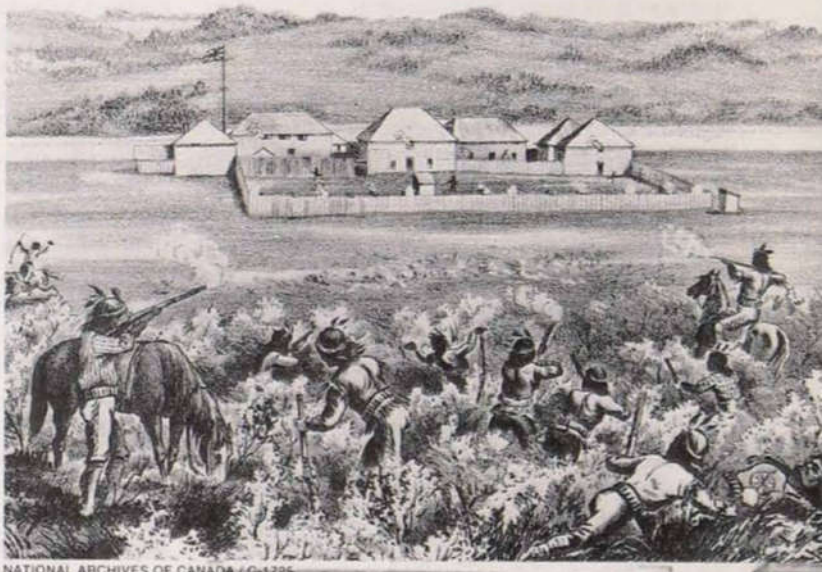
Pitt, where the government wanted to settle Big Bear's Crees, the last major holdouts from the reserve system. Here he met Tom Quinn, a rangy Minnesotan and the local Indian agent. Quinn had married a Cree woman with family ties to Big Bear. But at a time when Ottawa was ordering cutbacks, Quinn was a hardliner when it came to distributing government rations. By the fall of 1884, relations were hostile.

During these disputes the Cree leaders regarded Dickens as a sympathetic soul. "We like you. Your heart is good," Big Bear told Dickens, contrasting him with Quinn. For his part, Dickens noted in dispatches that as long as the Cree were given rations he didn't anticipate trouble.

But quarrels between Quinn and his clients over food broke out anew at Frog Lake in March 1885. After the first skirmish with the Métis, Dickens suggested that Quinn and the other whites come to Pitt where they could be protected. Quinn resolved to stay put, but told the six police at Frog Lake to go to the fort. Quinn believed Cree anger was directed at the police, a fatal misjudgment. Within days Quinn and eight others would be dead, with the agent the first to fall.

The Cree then moved on Fort Pitt, where Dickens initially refused to surrender. In a letter which repeated friendly references to Dickens, Big Bear told the police they would be allowed to leave without bloodshed. The civilians, mostly Hudson's Bay Company employees under factor William McLean, opted to place themselves in Big Bear's hands. With that, Dickens saw no further point in a bloody defence of the fort and retreated downriver to Battleford.

How does Dickens compare with his colleagues? One author has noted the police were a disparate–if not a desperate–lot, including "bro-



NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF CANADA / C-1725

"The Siege of Fort Pitt," as depicted in the **Canadian Illustrated War News**; *police and civilians were outnumbered and surrounded.*

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF CANADA / PA-118770

ken down gentlemen, Canadian bucolics and desperadoes, old soldiers, cowboys, sailors, and hellrake adventurers."

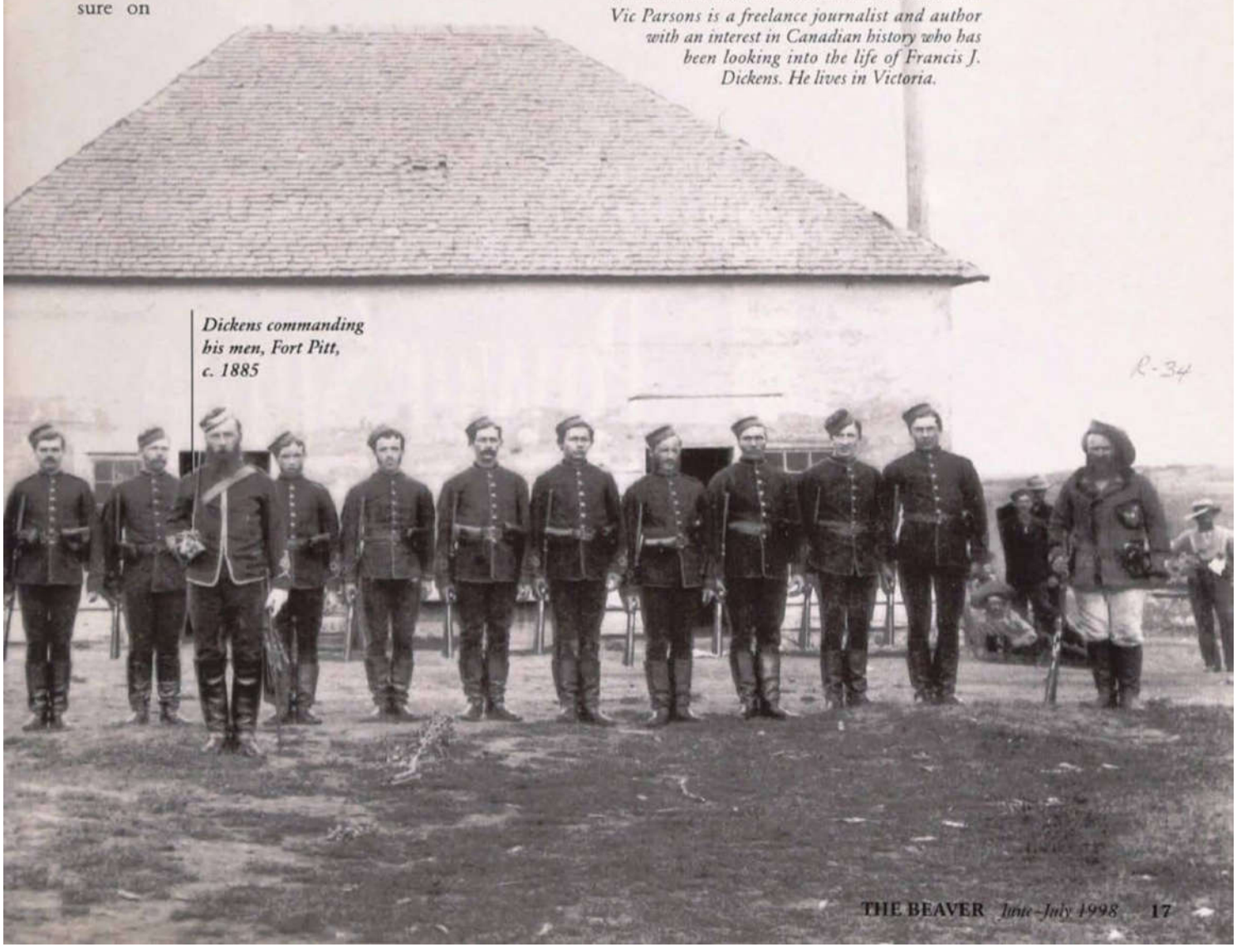
One Mountie who left the Force to become an Indian agent was fired for falsifying scales. Others who ran a pool hall were the subject of investigations by their erstwhile colleagues. The territory's lieutenant governor complained about some "making rather free" with native women. In 1883, 25 men deserted and many more clamoured to buy their way out of service. Eleven more deserted from Fort Macleod in one month of 1884. Whatever his other failings, Dickens never stood accused of immoral behaviour, and existing letters show he cared about his men. He loyally stuck to his post. After the ordeal at Pitt he requested his first leave in 11 years.

By that time, Dickens' spirit was crushed and his health irreparably damaged. Eventually he was invalided out. Then followed a battle for a retiring allowance. Influence came into play here, too, with a political friend asking Sir Charles Tupper, then high commissioner in London, to put pressure on Prime Minister Macdonald for a settlement.

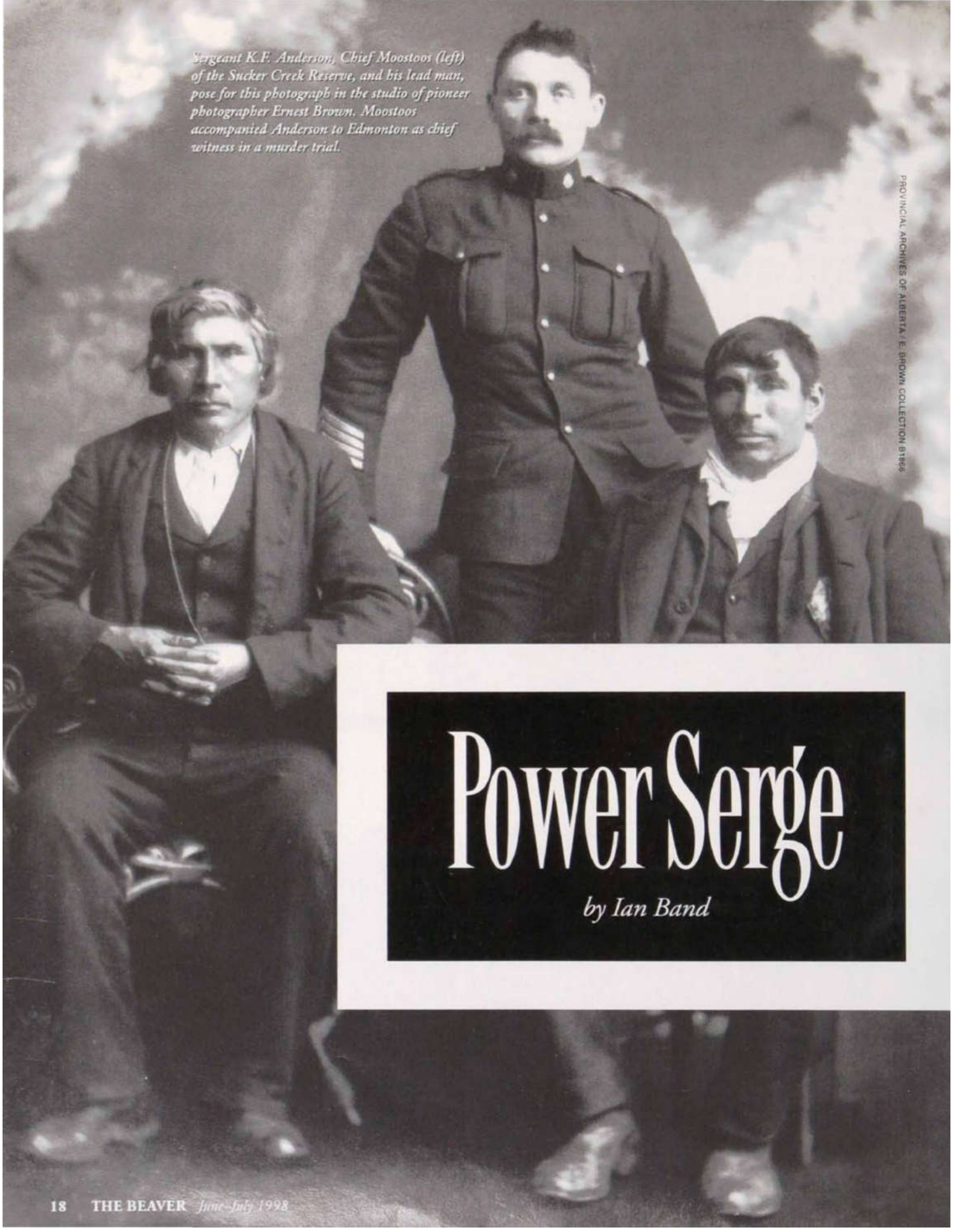
While awaiting his pension, Dickens met an American doctor who convinced him that he could mount a profitable lecture tour in the United States. As he sat down to supper in Moline, Illinois, before his first talk in June 1886, he suffered a heart attack and died. He was 42. About 40 years after Frank's death, his last surviving brother was sent the service medal earned in the North-West Rebellion. That and his sword can be seen today at the RCMP museum in Regina. In 1949, a lake in the La Ronge area of Saskatchewan was named after him.

Dickens may be seen as typical of those early NWMP officers, newcomers to the West, who were often out of their depth, understaffed and underequipped, and ignorant of the native culture. They were ordinary men with human failings who were expected to accomplish extraordinary deeds. Today we might wonder how they functioned as well as they did despite government bungling and their own shortcomings. ◆

Vic Parsons is a freelance journalist and author with an interest in Canadian history who has been looking into the life of Francis J. Dickens. He lives in Victoria.



Dickens commanding his men, Fort Pitt, c. 1885



Sergeant K.F. Anderson, Chief Moostoos (left) of the Sucker Creek Reserve, and his lead man, pose for this photograph in the studio of pioneer photographer Ernest Brown. Moostoos accompanied Anderson to Edmonton as chief witness in a murder trial.

PROVINCIAL ARCHIVES OF ALBERTA / E. BROWN COLLECTION B1866

Power Serge

by Ian Band

The relationship between Canada's native people and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police has long been the focus of public attention. At times, these two groups have enjoyed a mutual respect and understanding, with friendships developing in an atmosphere of peace and harmony. At other times, their relationship could only be described as one of misunderstanding, in which conflict, hostility, and violence prevailed.

This state of relations was especially true in the West and the North, where the RCMP established their roots and where today, they are still responsible for much of the policing services to native communities. During the early days of Confederation, the North-West Mounted Police (NWMP) accompanied most treaty parties during the negotiation and signing of treaties. Indeed, at the signing of the first treaty at Lower Fort Garry on July 27, 1871, uniformed troops were present as symbols of the power of the Crown.

The NWMP would be dispatched for this purpose through several treaty negotiations between representatives of the Canadian government and the natives of the Western Interior. Through such treaties, native sovereignty over the land was relinquished for government promises of economic assistance, educational facilities, and the creation of reserves.

To Canada's natives, the Mounties were the personification of a strong colonial government that would destroy their way of life. But the complex relationship between the two–sometimes allies, sometimes foes–would evolve into a strange but hopeful alliance.

The presence of the Mounted Police established a significant link between the native community and the federal government. The Mounted Police were seen then as they are now, as the "most visible manifestation of power and authority representative of a larger Canadian society, its institutions, customs and laws." The fashion in which the federal government and the Mounted Police conducted themselves over the next century would ultimately determine the state of their present-day relationship.

The controversy over relations between native people and the Mounted Police dates back to just after Confederation. The concept that a police force might express Canadian sovereignty and act to maintain good relations with native people was first suggested by Prime Minister Macdonald in late 1869, just before the Métis resistance temporarily hindered his goal to incorporate the colony of Red River into the National Policy. He stated:

> I have no doubt, come what will, there must be a military body, or at all events a body with military discipline at Fort Garry. It seems to me that the best Force would be Mounted Riflemen, trained partly as Cavalry. . . . This body should not be expressly military but should be styled Police.

His idea, first rejected by the Opposition in favour of a purely military expedition, was later accepted in the early 1870s, when it was clear that more was needed to respond to the many unique challenges of settling the vast North-West Territories. The North-West Mounted Police were created under the Federal Act of May 23, 1873. The prefix *Royal* was added to its title by grant of Edward VII in 1904; the Force became the Royal Canadian Mounted Police when its exclusively western mandate ended in 1920.

Prior to 1870, natives were considered equal to Europeans. In the Western Interior, the years between 1640 to 1870 were generally known as the "era of peaceful co-existence." Gerald Friesen has written that as the first inhabitants of our country, native people relied on plants and animals for food and moved regularly between "various resource zones according to the produce of the season, the fortunes of the hunt, and their diplomatic relations with neighbouring groups." It was naturally accepted that mobility was central to native culture and the ownership of property irrelevant.

During this period, and after the advent of Europeans, native people hunted, fished, and traded as they had always done. They used European trade goods, such as axes and knives, and their lives were transformed by certain European innovations, particularly the gun and the horse. "But most importantly," said Friesen, "native people continued to exercise control over their domestic economies and their diplomatic alliances."

Relations between western natives and non-natives during this period were distinguished by adaptation, relative peace, and cooperation. To be sure, with the arrival of the

Europeans in the 1600s, fighting did occur. However, warfare, particularly savage battles, occurred exclusively in eastern jurisdictions. The West, for its part, experienced skirmishes, uprisings, and rebellions. The relative difference has been generally attributed to the involvement of the Mounted Police.

Clearly there are two distinct views on Macdonald's real intentions for the Force. One group contends that the NWMP were established to maintain law and order among settlers and to protect the indigenous native population from unscrupulous traders and whisky runners. Rod Macleod argues that "the only possible Canadian west was a peaceful one." J.H. Gray maintains that "frontier Canada was almost unbelievably law abiding." According to William and Nora Kelly, the NWMP established a positive and friendly alliance by addressing the health and welfare problems of Canada's indigenous people. Friesen has further noted that the Mounties very quickly became the most important branch of the central government in its administration of the Northwest:

> They helped to supervise local Indian affairs, delivered mail, took the census, collected customs duties, provided medical services, established crop reports, issued relief supplies, and, perhaps most important, acted as justices of the peace and thus tried the great majority of suspects they apprehended.

Moreover, the NWMP ensured that peace prevailed in an unstable region that had the potential to become extremely violent. By keeping the peace, the Force allowed the government the time and financial resources to become involved in critical development projects, such as the railway and agriculture. Friesen compares this with the U.S. experience:

> Where Americans spent $20 million annually fighting plains Indians in the 1870s, the Canadian government, whose total annual budget was $19 million, spent less than $400,000 per year on the Mounted Police.

Indeed, attacking the Force, which represented all that was valuable in the Canadian tradition, was synonymous with attacking the country itself.

Other historians view the establishment and development of one of Canada's emerging national symbols in less than altruistic terms. Their views are summed up by Lorne and Caroline Brown, who assert that the NWMP were established to keep order on the prairies and to "facilitate the transfer of most of the territory of the region from Indian tribes to the federal government with a minimum of expense and bloodshed." Stan Horrall states:

> The NWMP did not protect the rights and interests of the indigenous population, but rather collaborated closely with business interests such as the Canadian Pacific Railway, that were involved in the economic development of the prairies and the West.

According to historian W.R. Morrison, who provides one of the more contemporary comprehensive assessments of the Mounted Police, the Force's attitude toward the native community was not as heroic as so often portrayed: "The evidence in police records shows that they looked upon them [native people] with a mixture of paternalism and contempt." Such contempt was massive, Morrison claims:

> For the police they [natives] were always "lazy"; the word appears like a Calvinist refrain throughout their reports. . . . Often seen as a "dirty nuisance"... the police took an unsentimental view of the Indian... and they judged them inferior.

Officers had no comprehension that, prior to the arrival of the Europeans, and the onset of the reserve system, natives had enjoyed highly successful survival patterns. This lack of knowledge, combined with their perception of the effects of poverty (so often misunderstood and misrepresented), contributed to their view of the native identity.

The dynamic between the Mounties and native people is rooted in the perception shared by the early society of the Western Interior and the police force itself. It seems that the two nurtured one another. Macleod has stated that the officers were crucial in the process:

Tom-tom drummers at a tea dance, with unidentified officer, 1869–99

> As a group the officers were elitist, sure of their position in society and, as such men tend to be, secure in their strongly held opinions and attitudes. They came to the North-West determined to mould it according to their image of what Canadian society should be.

Further evidence that the Force might not be as extraordinary as popular myth suggests is revealed by J.S. Milloy. He has illustrated that if ever there was a case of a "public facade of morality and private hypocrisy," it could be found in the Victorian and Edwardian standards of the time. Within the Force,this attitude was clear with respect to women, but nowhere was it more evident than in the Force's treatment of native women. "Members... were expected to adhere to the strict code of Victorian morality, and the careers of married men could be damaged or ended by irregularity." However, the Force's hierarchy of what Morrison termed "liaisons" with native women was seen as a convenience to men stationed in isolation for long periods.

During the fur trade it was common for marriage *a la façon du pays*. However, as Sylvia Van Kirk has established, cross-cultural marriage was not acceptable among new Canadians of the West. The police were not exempt. According to Morrison, when an Anglican missionary was asked by an officer for permission to marry a native woman, the missionary declined, saying, "he would prefer reporting to Ottawa that the officer had blown his brains out, though he did not at all protest the current relationship."

To be fair, the Mounted Police were not exceptional in their views towards cross-cultural marriages or their general view of native people: the Force merely reflected the prevalent norms and values of the majority of Canadians. The Mounted Police, Morrison states,

> displayed an attitude of Social Darwinism typical of their era.... Few Canadians... were so free of ethnocentrism that they would have granted the native people equality, either in theory or in fact; the police held no more than the current public and official view.

Law enforcement then, was not only about legality but also about cultural conformity. It is in this light that the political role of the Mounted Police, which called for a policy of assimilation rather than peace, and for order and good government, must be viewed. According to J. Miller it was in the service of that policy, more than for the purpose of protecting native people, that the police endeavoured to enforce it, because "it would thwart the movement (for land claims and other treaty promises) of Indian politicians among the reserves."

According to Friesen, the political status of the prairie native was actually determined before they negotiated their treaties, but it was never explained to them or made a subject of negotiation. Instead, unilateral government decisions reduced native people to the position of "minors or wards." Natives of the prairies were unfamiliar with the system of legal negotiation. When treaties were signed, they assumed they possessed full aboriginal rights, but were not informed of the limitations of the Indian Act–only later did they learn of the restrictions of a new justice system.

Traditional systems of native government were replaced by a confining and illusory form of democracy, in which the real power rested with the federal government in the person of the Indian agent.

This system, represented by the consolidation of several pieces of legislation into the Indian Act of 1876, and revised in 1880, was soon being employed as means of supervising the natives' established customs and beliefs. In every aspect of life, from criminal law to education and religious expression, from hunting to agriculture, from voting to the use of lawyers, native people were confronted by regulations that severely restricted their natural way of life.

Friesen has shown that the government's Indian policy was rooted in the prevailing ethnocentric attitudes of the time, attitudes that evolved in the century after 1760. Although Indian settlements, especially those in Upper Canada, functioned well enough as independent political and economic units, British authorities were determined to "civilize" their inhabitants under the Gradual Civilizing Act of 1857. When native leaders resisted the principles of private property (which called for the breakup of reserves into individual holdings of 50 acres), and when only a handful of native people applied for the newly administered enfranchisement, the new Canadian government imposed legal sanctions to control native self-government. By the time the Indian Act was passed in 1876, the federal government and its agents, including the Mounted Police, had established a system of "wardship, colonization, and tutelage" that limited not only native self-government but native economic development as well.

Traditional systems of native government were

replaced by a confining and illusory form of democracy, in which the real power rested with the federal government in the person of the Indian agent. Indian agents supervised voting, chaired meetings, kept official records, decided when, where, and if the chief and council would meet, and controlled the council's agenda. Through An Act to Amend The Indian Act, 1880, all Indian agents were given significant powers by being appointed as justices of the peace. Each agent had full authority to conduct trials that involved Indians charged with disobeying the Indian Act or with certain crimes under the Criminal Code anywhere in the country. As a result, Indian agents could direct the police to prosecute "troublemakers" and could then judge them accordingly. The Act also meant that the personal mobility of native people was severely restricted. Hunting parties in search of food could be rounded up and brought back to the reserves by members of the North-West Mounted Police. In some instances, the police were charged with the task of seeing to it that native people never left their reserves unless they had permission from the Indian agent.

Such wide discretionary powers meant Indian agents had many opportunities to abuse their authority. Moreover, agents only intervened in cases where native people were involved, whereas non-native citizens were entitled to a fair and impartial trial with legal representation. It soon became obvious that a double standard was being applied based on race. Since the Mounted Police enforced this double standard, native people viewed them as part of the unfair process. This would have a serious effect on future relations between the two.

The signing of treaties and the establishment of reserves marked the initiation of the process described as "directed social change." In this classic model of social analysis, one social group dominates another, manipulating and forcing it to adapt to the larger culture. In this way, non-native Canadian expectations and policies would slowly supplant the ideas and ambitions of the native people. Eventually, some historians theorized, there would cease to be a distinguishable native identity.

The shrinking size of reserves supports this theory. Between 1901–12, with an influx of new immigrants flooding the West, the federal government substantially reduced reserve holdings, with land handed over to the newcomers for agricultural settlement. Yet native people did not realize any social or economic benefit. A similar process took place after World War I. This time, reserves that had been established through the treaty process were expropriated to reestablish thousands of returning soldiers anticipating good farm land. The government gave the soldiers what they wanted, and natives were relocated to reserves on inferior land. Once again dispossessed, they tried to build new lives.

Milloy argues convincingly that native people who were unable to adequately adjust to an "appropriate" middle-class lifestyle, or who were determined to defend and maintain their traditional culture, or who were "damaged beyond repair by the relentless development of a modern society," were viewed as a threat to stability. When it became clear that the majority of native people were not adjusting to the dominant society's definition of success, native people revisited their traditional identity and embraced those values they deemed important. Unfortunately, the foundations of their culture, including their languages and certain ceremonies, like the Potlatch and Sun Dance, had either deteriorated over the years or been altogether outlawed. As a result, many felt lost or trapped between cultures. In a classic blame-the-victim scenario, they were perceived by the dominant society as a problem of their own making. The Mounted Police and the criminal justice system were expected to deal with them accordingly.

During this period, from approximately 1870 to 1965, native equality was challenged, then destroyed, and native destiny became shaped by the alien but dominant culture. Relations between the Mounted Police and native community continued to decline, and would soon reach crisis proportions, with armed standoffs across the country, and disproportionately high rates of incarceration among natives.

Prior to the mid 1960s, the federal government gave little consideration to native cultural values as a contributing element to improved relations. Later, however, this changed. This was a response to the considerable and unavoidable political pressure brought to bear by aboriginal organizations. They called for more control over their own affairs through native self-government, establishment of aboriginal rights, and native-controlled policing programs.

Many of the problems between native people and the RCMP are directly or indirectly the result of historical, economic, social, and political circumstances, many of which still remain. Given the nature of Canadian society and its institutions, profound change in social or economic conditions for most natives is still very far off. However, politically, especially over the last two decades, native communities are beginning to find their voices for wider public and official recognition of their historically unique status and cultural heritage.

As a result, the direction and extent of political reform as a condition for improved relations depends on what course local native communities, the two levels of government (including the RCMP), and the Canadian electorate are prepared to pursue. Unless government makes allowances for native political and cultural aspirations in the areas of policing, for example, history will repeat itself and relations will become even more strained.

All have recognized that for sustained success, this reform process must be mutual. Government is starting to do its part by modifying existing policing arrangements to accommodate reasonable and preferred alternatives. Native communities are moderating their political and cultural aspirations by understanding their own limitations.

This process started with the pragmatic realization that greater education is the key to cultivating a more harmonious relationship between cultures. Joint understanding, it has been amazingly discovered, reduces ignorance, ethnocentrism, prejudice, and discrimination. The federal government and the RCMP have recently implemented some programs that focus on improved relations.

In the early 1960s, the RCMP invited no input from native people regarding the administration and implementation of policing services that affected them. Between 1965 and 1973, however, governments began to recognize that the poor state of relations was the result of a number of problems, including over-incarceration of native people and unresponsive policing on reserves. From this grew the awareness that the task of policing reserves could be shared between both groups.

In 1973 the RCMP began their Special Constable Program, designed to attract native officers to the Force. The standards for new recruits were relaxed, compared to those for regular officers, to attract as many candidates as possible. Native leaders considered the program an improvement, but still less desirable than a true native-controlled police force. In 1990, the RCMP eliminated the program in a quest to achieve more egalitarian standards.

Native policing programs can be generally divided into two categories; non-native-controlled, or native-controlled. Often, there are transitional programs, whereby control from non-natives to natives is phased in over a period of time.

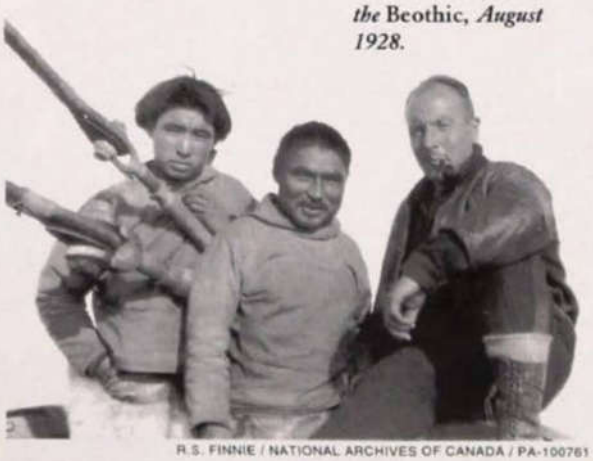
Native-controlled policing programs are separate, autonomous forces which operate on several reserves across the country. These include forces such as the Amerindian Police in Quebec, the Dakota-Ojibway Tribal Police in Manitoba, and the Blood Tribal Police Force in Alberta. There are now a large number of band constables, who are responsible to the local band council, and who deal with community matters and enforce band bylaws. Native policing programs provide a measure of self-determination for native people, by granting local control to the band council, a police commission, or a committee of band members and government law-enforcement professionals. In communities with native police programs, only certain elements of police operations are under control of the communities – major criminal code offences are still handled by the RCMP.

In addition to finding new approaches, there is a heightened awareness on both sides for continuing education. Universities in different regions now offer interdisciplinary programs for both groups, including cross-cultural training programs that focus on history, sociology, political science, and the basic principles of law.

The RCMP has adopted a community-based policing model that reflects both this partnership and cross-cultural awareness. In this model, the role of police is broadened to include not only law enforcement, but maintaining peace. Community consultation becomes essential, and contributes to an approach in which community and police identify potential problems ahead of time and work to deter them. Cultural awareness – knowledge of the unique circumstances that native communities are subject to – alleviates much of the victimization of the past.

Finally, it is becoming apparent that there is much to be gained by involving the community in the decision-making process, including a shared sense of responsibility for positive relations. The Force has learned from past experience that alienated communities will not support a process they feel is imposed upon them. Now, the benefits of inclusion are finally being not just recognized but practised. If we know our history, we are much less likely doomed to repeat it. ◆

Ian Band, of Winnipeg, based this article on his master's thesis in political studies from the University of Manitoba.



R.S. FINNIE / NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF CANADA / PA-100761

Inuit hunters Sadluk and Kaingik assist Constable Stanley Wilson of the Dundas Harbour Detachment aboard the* Beothic, *August 1928.

Surgeons' Stories

by Jody F. Decker

When the men of the North-West Mounted Police set up their first posts in the West, not only did they bring law and order, they brought social and medical services. Surgeons were stationed at the major posts and travelled among the various detachments, dispensing treatment to police and inhabitants alike. The early reports from NWMP surgeons reveal a unique side of life among recruits during the first years of the Force.

John G. Kittson, M.D., was a man of high standards. He was hired by the newly formed North-West Mounted Police (NWMP) in 1874 to set up a medical examining board in Toronto to procure "intelligent and able-bodied" recruits; there were numerous applicants that first year. Before departing for the Northwest, however, he was forced to "invalidate" four of the recruits chosen by the board. One man, Kittson wrote in his first medical report to Commissioner French, had "constitutional syphilis," and another a dislocated shoulder that was "evident even to an unprofessional eye." A third recruit, diagnosed with pulmonary consumption, joined on advice of the medical examiner who convinced him Manitoba was " 'a famous country for weak lungs'; a very reliable way to get rid of a patient," Kittson added sarcastically. This was the first of many confrontations Kittson had with medical examiners in the East over the quality of recruits sent to the Northwest.

1874 JUNE In June of 1874, senior surgeon Dr. John Kittson, assistant surgeon Dr. Richard Nevitt, and veterinary surgeon Dr. John Poett, along with three divisions of high-spirited and smartly dressed officers and men, departed Toronto for Fort Dufferin in southern Manitoba. Just south of "the line" a short distance from Fort Dufferin, "prairie cholera" broke out among the men. Diarrhea was a well-known enemy of the neophyte prairie traveller. The Métis hunted buffalo on this land, but seldom ate fresh meat as the troops had done; jerked meat, pemmican, and marrow-fat constituted the prudent prairie diet. A worse fate awaited the troops at Dufferin – typhoid fever was epidemic in Manitoba and surrounding territory, and four recruits became infected. They were immediately quarantined by an anxious Kittson, who feared disease and demoralization would disrupt the expedition. His fears were unfounded, but for years to come, typhoid fever would wreak havoc with the troops in many regions of the Northwest.

KITTSON When the troops struck camp on July 7 for their Great March West to Fort Whoop-up in Blackfoot Indian country, the four fever cases and five other sick men were left at Dufferin in the capable hands of the U.S. army sur-

Divisions and major posts of the North-West Mounted Police, c. 1886.

DR. J. DECKER / WILFRID LAURIER UNIVERSITY

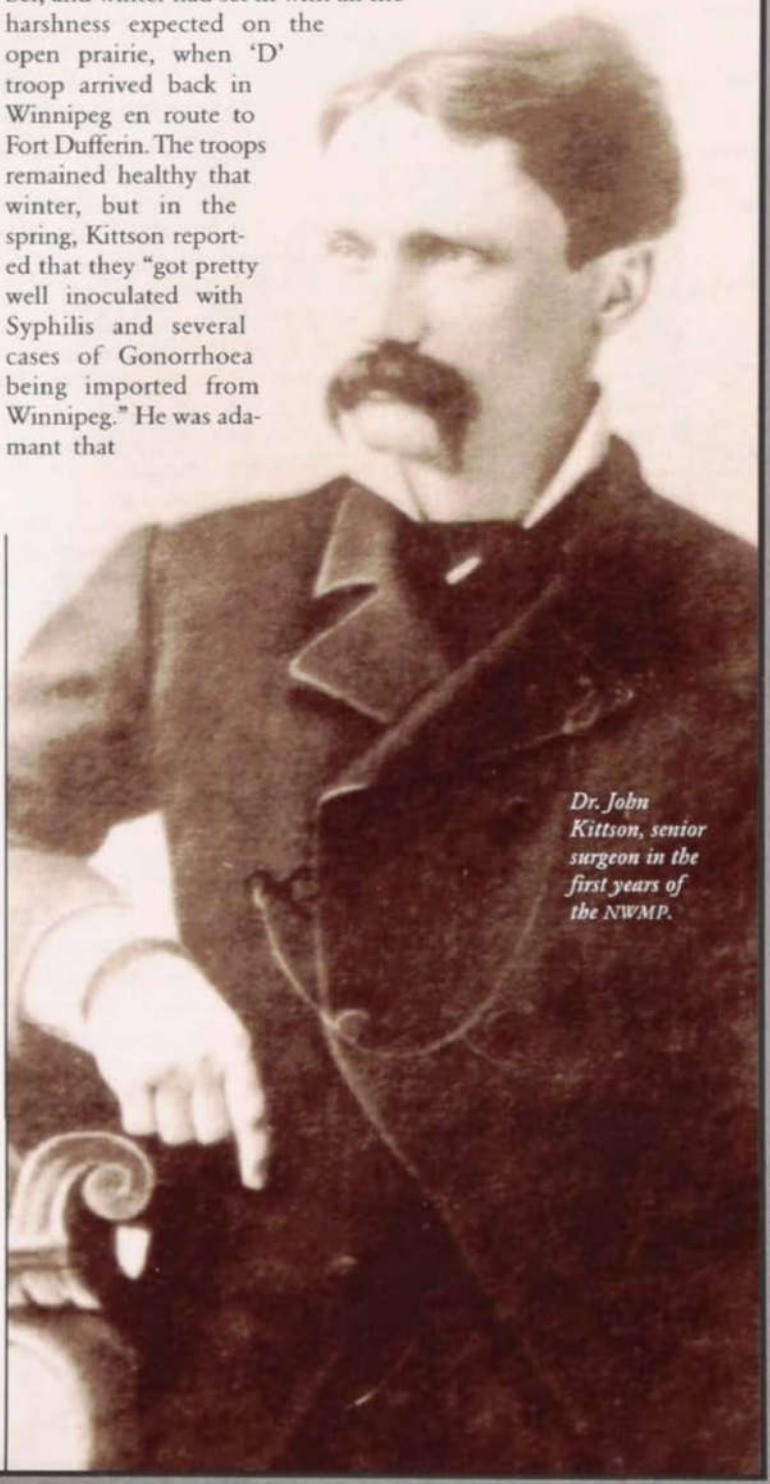
M-80

geon at Pembina and a Mrs. Olman. Of this extraordinary woman, Kittson wrote: "An excellent Lady, braving all dangers, administered to their wants personally, And every day added to their Comfort by many acts of Kindness which only the tender Heart of Woman can suggest to her willing hands." Such compassionate remarks were typical of Kittson, whose first report was lengthy, emotional, and intriguing. Most surgeons' reports were tables listing the disease, illness, or surgery performed; the number of men off sick and average length of their illness; and a few summary paragraphs.

During the Great March, Kittson related how mosquitoes, coal dust from the burnt prairie grass (which stung the eyes and irritated exposed skin), alkali water, sweltering hot days and cold nights, excoriated feet (caused by walking in unfit shoes), an outbreak of lice, debilitating diarrhea, and two cases of typhoid fever, contrived to slow down the expedition. In desperation, he formed a "Cripple Camp" of hospital tents to isolate the infectious men and rest the weary troops and horses.

Nearby, a band of Sioux were camped. Upon learning that Kittson was a doctor, the Indians agreed to let the "pale-faced Medicine Man" demonstrate his medical acumen by treating their sick. Over the next several days, Kittson conducted a "sick parade," treating three Indian men and five women. One Indian man was blind, another had sciatica, and the third was afflicted with "shaking palsy." Kittson was not optimistic about curing the men, and feared for his reputation even more after examining the women: three of them had advanced consumption and two had dyspepsia (a stomach ailment). These disorders among Indian women were not uncommon, he wrote. They "follow in the wake of want, hardship and exposure. The cruelty they have to bear at the hands of their Lords and Masters is incredible." A few years later, Dr. George Kennedy, the surgeon stationed at Fort Macleod in Blackfoot country, reported similar afflictions among those Indians: "Opthalmia, phthisis and other chest infections, and venereal; phthisis and chest infections were found especially common among the females, and it was rare to find a woman over thirty years old with sound lungs."

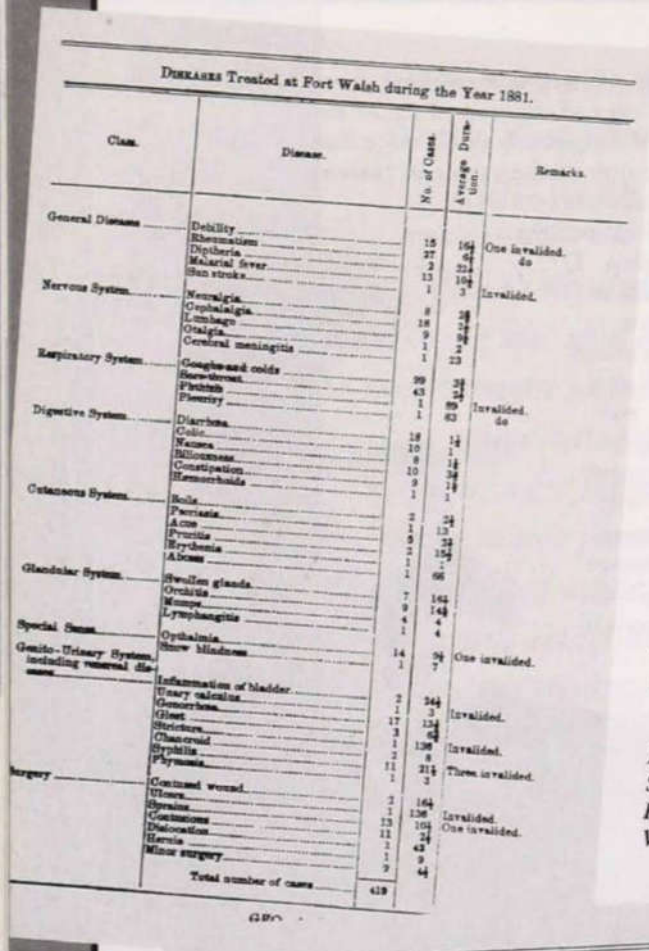
Near the end of September, Kittson, along with troops 'D' and 'E', turned back east. Troop 'E' was left at Fort Ellice, where Kittson was asked to administer to a man with typhoid fever. Within days, he too had succumbed to the disease and remained dangerously ill for more than two weeks. It was now the beginning of November, and winter had set in with all the harshness expected on the open prairie, when 'D' troop arrived back in Winnipeg en route to Fort Dufferin. The troops remained healthy that winter, but in the spring, Kittson reported that they "got pretty well inoculated with Syphilis and several cases of Gonorrhoea being imported from Winnipeg." He was adamant that



Dr. John Kittson, senior surgeon in the first years of the NWMP.

J.W. TOPLEY / NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF CANADA / PA-042138

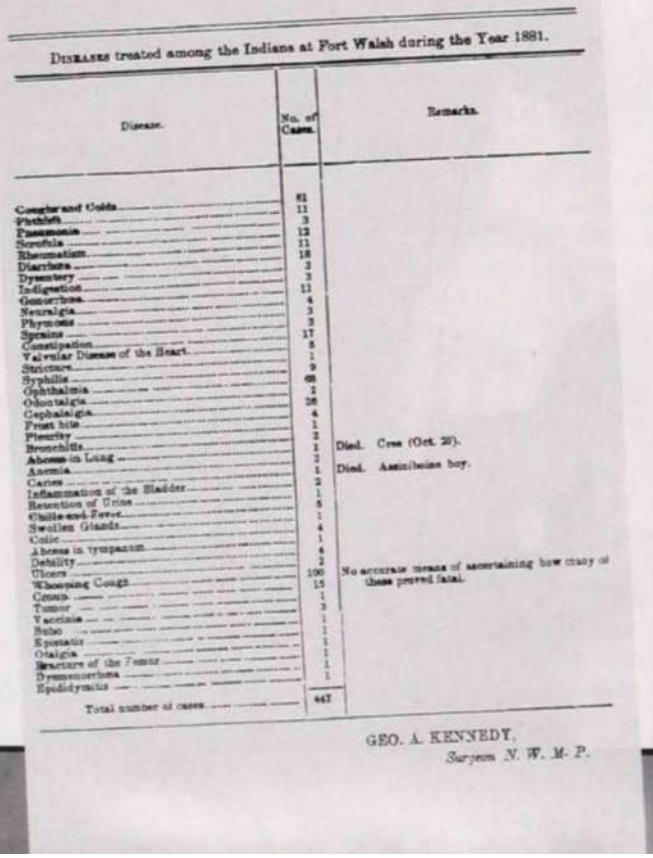
men applying for the Force must be meticulously examined for signs of syphilis for "as a distinct disease, [it] has caused us more trouble, vexation and loss of time than any other one Disease not to mention that other diseases are exaggerated by the presence of this virus in the system."



Diseases Treated at Fort Walsh during the Year 1881.

Class.	Disease.	No. of Cases.	Duration Average Days.	Remarks.
General Diseases	Debility	15	164	One invalided.
	Rheumatism	27	6½	do
	Diptheria	2	22½	
	Malarial fever	13	10½	
	Sun stroke	1	3	Invalided.
Nervous System	Neuralgia	8	3½	
	Cephalalgia	18	3½	
	Lumbago	9	3½	
	Otalgia	1	2	
	Cerebral meningitis	1	23	
Respiratory System	Coughs and colds	99	3½	
	Sore throat	43	3½	
	Phthisis	1	89	Invalided.
	Pleurisy	1	63	do
Digestive System	Diarrhœa	18	1½	
	Colic	10	1	
	Nausea	8	1½	
	Biliousness	10	3½	
	Constipation	9	1½	
	Hemorrhoids	1	1	
Cutaneous System	Boils	2	2½	
	Psoriasis	1	13	
	Acne	9	22	
	Pruritis	2	15½	
	Erythemia	1	66	
	Abcess	7	16½	
Glandular System	Swollen glands	9	14½	
	Orchitis	4	4	
	Mumps	1	4	
	Lymphangitis			
Special Senses	Opthalmia	14	7½	One invalided.
	Snow blindness	1	7	
Genito-Urinary System, including venereal diseases	Inflammation of bladder	2	3½	
	Urinary calculus	1	3	Invalided.
	Gonorrhœa	17	13½	
	Gleet	3	6½	
	Stricture	1	136	Invalided.
	Chancroid	2	8	
	Syphilis	11	21½	Three invalided.
	Phymosis	1	3	
Surgery	Contused wound	2	16½	
	Ulcers	1	136	Invalided.
	Sprains	13	10½	One invalided.
	Contusions	11	24	
	Dislocation	1	42	
	Hernia	1	9	
	Minor surgery	9	44	
	Total number of cases	419		

GEO. A. KENNEDY,
Surgeon N. W. M. P.



Diseases treated among the Indians at Fort Walsh during the Year 1881.

Disease.	No. of Cases.	Remarks.
Coughs and Colds	81	
Phthisis	11	
Pneumonia	3	
Scrofula	12	
Rheumatism	11	
Diarrhœa	18	
Dysentery	3	
Indigestion	3	
Gonorrhœa	11	
Neuralgia	4	
Phymosis	3	
Sprains	3	
Constipation	17	
Valvular Disease of the Heart	5	
Stricture	1	
Syphilis	9	
Ophthalmia	69	
Odontalgia	2	
Cephalalgia	28	
Frost bite	4	
Pleurisy	1	
Bronchitis	2	Died. Cree (Oct. 28).
Abcess in Lung	1	Died. Assiniboine boy.
Anemia	2	
Caries	1	
Inflammation of the Bladder	6	
Retention of Urine	1	
Chills and Fever	4	
Swollen Glands	1	
Colic	4	
Abcess in tympanum	2	
Debility	100	No accurate means of ascertaining how many of these proved fatal.
Ulcers	15	
Whooping Cough	1	
Croup	3	
Tumor	1	
Vaccinia	1	
Boils	1	
Hysteria	1	
Otalgia	1	
Fracture of the Femur	1	
Dysmenorrhœa	1	
Epididymitis	447	
Total number of cases		

GEO. A. KENNEDY,
Surgeon N. W. M. P.

Medical records of Surgeon George Kennedy for Fort Walsh, 1881.

KENNEDY Further west, a similar disease scenario was penned by Dr. Kennedy, then stationed at Fort Walsh, a post built in 1875 by the NWMP to deal with the whisky smugglers. The post was a hub of activity; it was one day's ride from the American border, the terminus of a supply route from Fort Benton, a meeting place and former hunting ground of the Cree, the site of an Indian agency, and by 1878, the Force's headquarters. It quickly developed the reputation of an unhealthy post, and partly for that reason was closed in 1883 after new headquarters had been established at Regina. Kennedy's 1881 report was notable as it was the only NWMP surgeon's report that century to differentiate Indians from whites. Gender was not specified, but a case of dysmenorrhea noted by Kennedy suggests that some of his Indian clientele were female.

Over half of the 886 cases seen by Kennedy in 1881 were Indians. Coughs, colds, eye problems, diarrhea, and venereal diseases were the most prevalent disorders among both Indians and whites, a pattern that would persist for several years. Occasionally, an outbreak of an infectious disease would escalate the surgeon's case load. (For example, in 1881, Kennedy saw at least 100 Indians who were suffering from an outbreak of whooping cough, and in 1886, while stationed at Fort Macleod, he reported that the whole country from Regina to the Rockies was grappling with an unnamed fever.)

Along with what was locally called typho-malarial fever, or mountain fever, venereal diseases were also rampant at Fort Walsh. A former recruit from there alleged that these were unknown among the Indians before the advent of the Force in the Northwest. This was contradicted by Kennedy, who wrote in his annual report for 1881: "A feature in the medical history of the last year, and one that is very much to be regretted, is the introduction of syphilis among the men. . . . It was brought over from the other side of the line by the Cree and Assiniboine camps on their return here a year ago last fall. In the present state of the Indians it is practically impossible to define the limits of the disease and effect a quarantine, but if new cases occur as frequently as they have been doing of late, some such decisive action must be taken." Out of a total contingency of nearly 100 men at Fort Walsh that year, over 30 cases of venereal disease were reported by Kennedy.

The scourge of venereal disease represented a tremendous drain of manpower. Its prevalance became the health threat that most concerned the surgeons. Syphilis could sideline a man for an average of three weeks, gonorrhea for two. Thus at Fort Walsh alone, more than 467 days of work were lost in 1881. When applied to the entire force over those early years, the effects of venereal disease were formidable. Thus fighting the disease became a priority.

This high incidence had already attracted the attention of Lieutenant Governor Laird, who suggested in a letter to NWMP Commissioner Macleod in 1878 that "some of your officers at Fort Walsh are making rather free with the women around there." Two years later, Mr. Joseph Royal, the Member from Provencher in Manitoba, was quoted as saying "many members of the force were living in concubinage with Indian women." These charges were met with indignation from members of the Force. In response, a correspondent from Fort Walsh was quoted in the *Globe* as saying: "I know of no case where men or officers in the force keep concubines ... though some men are married to half-breed women, which can hardly be called a crime."

There must have been an element of truth to Laird's assertions, for in Kennedy's 1882 report, his summary indicated that 15 percent of the men at Fort Walsh had been treated for venereal disease in less than two months that year.

JUKES Late in 1882, Dr. Augustus Jukes replaced Kennedy at Fort Walsh. In a letter to his superior, Jukes voiced concern about the "late rapid and alarming spread of venereal diseases, more especially syphilis of a malignant type which prevails at this post to a frightful extent among the Indians who visit it in great numbers from the neighbouring 'Blood' and 'Piegan' Reservations." From the Force's headquarters four years later, Jukes wrote to the Commissioner voicing his frustration over the inordinate number of men still being recruited with venereal disease. Kittson's entreaty 11 years earlier had been largely ignored, it seemed.

BAIN In 1889, from Prince Albert, Assistant Surgeon Bain offered the following reason for this debilitating outbreak: "There are several cases of gonorrhoea to report, but I fear this does not represent all the venereal cases that occurred during the year. I am of the opinion that the order stopping a certain amount of pay of men 'off duty' from venereal disease [passed in 1882] is having the effect of making the men conceal their disease and causing them to seek relief from druggists and quack specifics. There is the danger of these diseases being communicated to healthy men, and it is worthy of your consideration whether this order should be continued." Surgeon Jukes at Regina strongly endorsed Bain's remarks. If the order was not rescinded, then "a monthly examination of every man in the force should be made. ...These diseases are by no means peculiar to the NWT, but are unfortunately found everywhere throughout the civilised world in all towns, cities, camps, garrisons, and wherever considerable numbers of young, unmarried men are congregated; and all unwise legislation enforced under penalty serves inevitably to aggravate rather than diminish the disastrous consequences of keeping its existence a secret." The pay stoppage, originally proposed by Kittson in 1876 to "discourage malingerers," was eventually abolished.

Cases of venereal disease decreased during the 1800s from a high of 26 percent in 1884, to 11 percent in 1885. In the 1890s, when the strength of the Force had fallen to around 775 men, only 3 percent were reported as being afflicted.

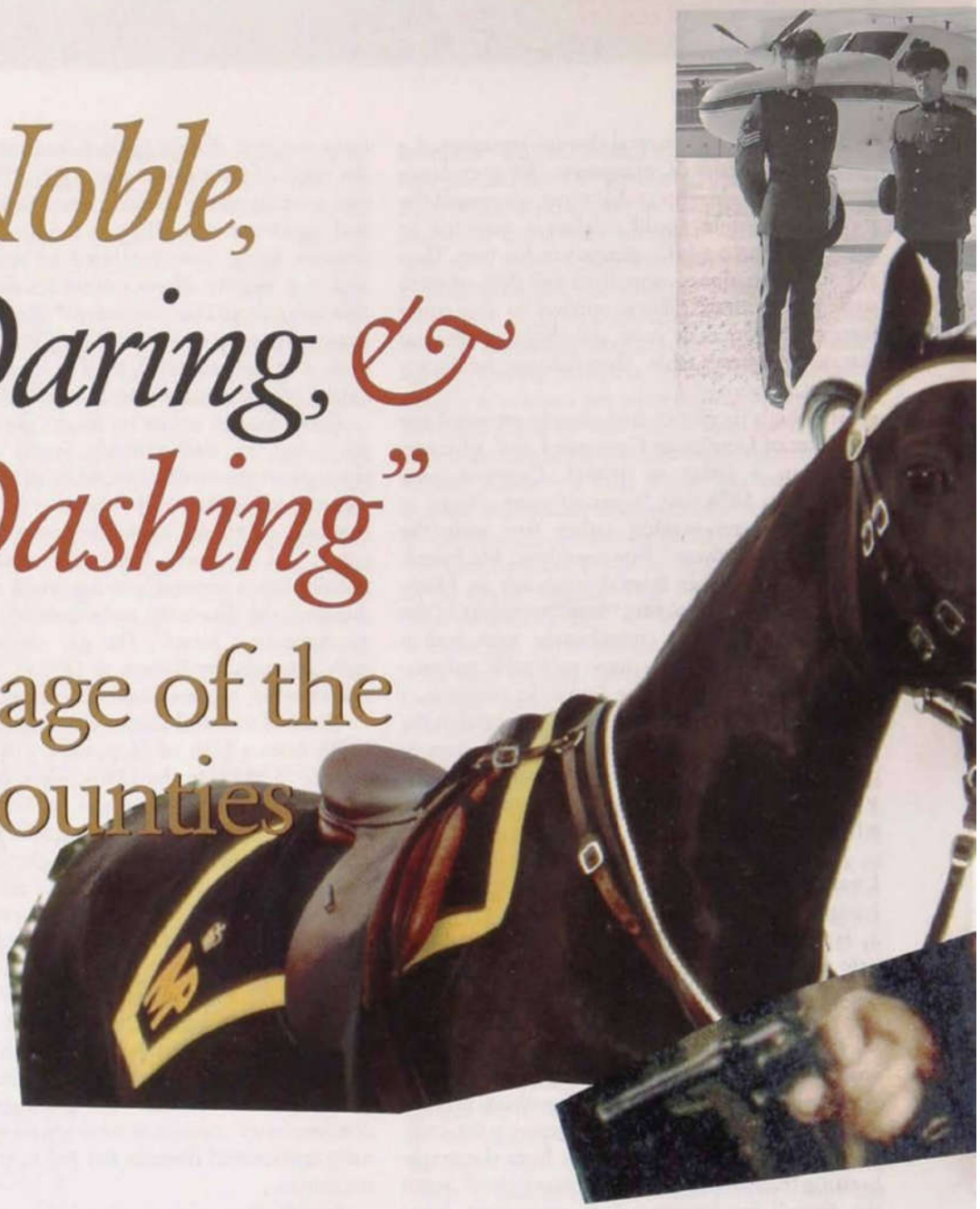
The surgeons' reports shed light on broader historical issues. No doubt, some recruits came west with venereal disease; others contracted it once they had arrived. The question of who gave it to whom, however, is speculative. Punishing the men for their indiscretions only served to drive venereal diseases into textual obscurity, label the afflicted person as having an "unspeakable" terminal disease, and paradoxically aid in the spread of a disease void of treatment. Our contemporary concept of what is now termed sexually transmitted diseases has led to similar consequences.

A wide array of diseases and illnesses afflicted the NWMP men and affected the overall operations of the Force. But it is the anecdotal remarks from the surgeons' reports that breathe life into the muffled, often silenced voices of women, natives, and ordinary men of the Force in the early years of its existence, and help us redefine historical truth. ◆

Dr. Jody F. Decker, an associate professor in geography and environmental studies at Wilfrid Laurier University, Waterloo, Ontario, has done considerable research in nineteenth-century medical geography of Western Canada.

"Noble, Daring, & Dashing"

The Image of the Mounties



by Shane Peacock

Over its 125-year history, the RCMP has become a national icon, its image often manufactured by the popular media of the times. Early news reports, dime novels, movies, radio, and television have all extolled the virtues of the men in scarlet. But this popular image, so beloved by the public, has also shielded the Force from public scrutiny and left us scratching our heads. Who exactly *are* the Mounties?

If someone were to tell you that Tyrone Power, Alan Ladd, and Randolph Scott all played Canadians on the silver screen, your first question, being a good Canadian, might be . . . why? Well, because actors who could play noble, daring, and dashing individuals were needed. But that answer wouldn't satisfy. Only when you were informed that these icons wore the Stetson of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police would this make any sense. Despite various high-profile Mountie stumblings in recent years, and revisionist history that has fingered their forebears as fallible human beings with the prejudices of their time, the heroic image of our mounted men lives on. We believe in it to this day, even when we're being very modern and trying not to, by making fun of it.

In the series finale of this year's international hit television show *Due South*, Constable Benton Fraser commandeers a Lake Superior ship after discovering that dastardly deeds are being perpetrated within its confines; deeds that are about to cause a mutiny. When he boldly confronts the villain in front of a simmering crew, the accused expresses his innocence and turns various charges back on Fraser. Confusion reigns. Then one man

turns toward the constable and asks, "How do we know you're telling the truth?" The ship's captain, played by veteran Shakespearean actor Douglas Campbell, answers. "Look at him!" he shouts in dulcet tones as he casts a glance up toward the man in scarlet, "He's a *Mountie!*"

It's a joke that makes sense not just at home but pretty well around the world, and not only because Mounties are easy fodder for satire in a somewhat cynical age. Constable Benton Fraser –ridiculously handsome, honourable and effective–is simultaneously believable as a hero. Canadians are nearly genetically unable to celebrate such figures. We have somehow reached 131 almost bereft of folk heroes, and we are capable of interrogating the image of almost any of our high-achievers into shards of broken clay. But we have one hero whom we either cannot or will not fully disrespect. We may laugh at Dave Broadfoot harpooning the image on *Air Farce* or remember how hilarious brainless Dudley Do-Right was, but bring a full-dress Mountie into a room in 1998 and even the most cynical of our number feels at least a tiny rush of pride. It's very un-Canadian. This begs a two-part question: Why has the Mountie become almost the ultimate hero in our eternally hero-less land? And how in the world did he get up on that pedestal?

THE RCMP

An early Henri Julien drawing depicting the Great March West: settings made for heroes.

The North-West Mounted Police came into existence with little fanfare in 1873 when Sir John A. Macdonald (nonheroic heavy drinker), responding to problems in the West with Yankee whisky traders, natives, and precious settlers, created a force of mounted men to put things straight. A terse ad in a Montreal paper early the next year required nothing like heroism or square jaws from its respondents, though it did hint at what was to come. "The candidate must have good antecedents," it proclaimed, "and be a good horseman."

Keith Walden, whose *Visions of Order* is perhaps the seminal book about the image of the Mounties, wrote that "Some scholars have pointed to a particular poem or newspaper story as the starting point of the Mounties' reputation, but beyond this, the process by which their image was formulated and dispersed is largely unknowable." He also theorizes that "if the police were viewed as being heroic and pure, it was because many people, not just those who wore red coats, wanted to see them that way. The efforts of the Force only coincided with a wide predisposition within Canadian, American and British society." Walden seems correct, but like most historians he is always trying to put things into historical context. It could be argued that there are such obvious reasons the Force became renowned, even before the "large scale adulation . . . in the last decade of the nineteenth century," that the process is almost irrelevant, and the predisposition he eloquently spoke of is an eternal one, not connected to any time period.

"In early June 1874," David Cruise and Alison Griffiths wrote in their book *The Great Adventure,* "a letter arrived at the Montreal offices of the *Canadian Illustrated News.* Addressed to the manager, the letter, penned by Colonel French, invited a reporter/artist to accompany the Mounted Police expedition, which would travel through some of the wildest terrain known to mankind to the foot of the Rocky Mountains." It was an invitation that was hard to resist, both from the point of view of the magazine, and the 21-year-old illustrator, Henri Julien, who was soon excitedly on his way. That historic trip, from Manitoba to Fort Whoop-up in southern Alberta, was not entirely the noble venture Victorian history recorded, but the drawings that Julien sent out to the nation beginning on June 27, with a full page depicting the commissioner, the surgeon, and a gathering of six upright, smartly uniformed individuals, had to have captured the imaginations of many readers. Illustrations continued into October, once on the front page, another time in a two-page spread. Mounties were shown on horseback in gorgeous prairie backdrops,

PHOTO CREDITS PAGES 28–29 (CLOCKWISE FROM UPPER LEFT): AIR DIVISION STAFF TAKE DELIVERY OF TWIN OTTER / DE HAVILLAND CANADA; DAVE BROADFOOT AS SERGEANT RENFREW / DAVE BROADFOOT PRODUCTIONS INC.; SGT. NICHOLSON, C. 1910 / THE RCMP; 1873 UNIFORM / THE RCMP; JEANNETTE MACDONALD / NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF CANADA / NFA 6904; HORSE / THE RCMP; FUR CAP, DOG AND PISTOL FROM POSTER / THE RCMP MUSEUM.

apparently noble adventurers in the huge, wide-open frontier of a growing nation. (Readers likely didn't think about the fact that this nation belonged to someone else.) Not all reports from within the Force were positive: "The Manitoba mounted police are a disgusted lot," read one. "They complain that they were shamefully sold. The old story – hard work and small pay." But the images were seductive, the settings made for heroes.

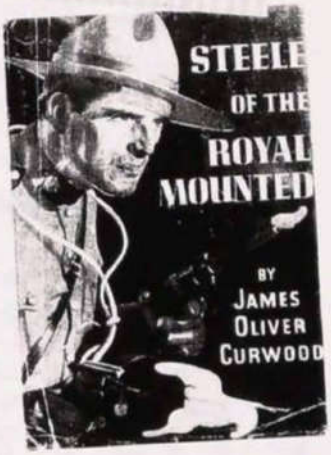
In 1877 Sitting Bull came north, and in 1885 the Mounties were involved in the North-West Rebellion. To this day, despite some qualifications (Walden speaks of Sitting Bull's political need to be peaceful and project near subservience), their calm interaction with the legendary chief is praised, especially when contrasted with American troubles; their actions during the Rebellion, however, are not universally admired. By the end of the century the Mounties had experienced more than two decades of relatively peaceful policing in the West (though part of their mandate was to pressure natives onto reservations) and entered a new period of glory in the Yukon. Their legend began to grow, both at home and abroad. With such a background, flawed in reality or not, it isn't surprising.

Though the first books and novels about the Mounties appeared in the 1880s and '90s, the source of one of their greatest myths came even earlier. On April 12, 1877 the Fort Benton (Montana) *Record* printed an admiring report about "the vigilance of Major Irving and the energy of Captain Windsor of the NW Mounted Police" in hunting down and prosecuting evil whisky traders. "The MPs are worse than bloodhounds when they scent the track of a smuggler, and they fetch their man every time."

The image of the Mountie who always got his man began appearing sporadically in the 1880s, in such things as *Trooper and Redskin in the Far Northwest,* the memoirs of John G. Donkin, a former member from Great Britain. Then it entered the world of novels, and began exploding into stardom.

Though they can be found in many countries, most novels originated in Great Britain, the United States, and Canada. British authors were most prolific at first. It wasn't that Canadians and Americans weren't producing this genre in those early years (for example, Toronto journalist Edmund Collins wrote *Annette, the Métis Spy* in 1886) but Brits like Roger Pocock, who wrote *Tales of the Western Life* in 1888, and John Mackie, who published *The Devil's Playground* in 1894, seemed to set the pace. They would be followed by Ridgwell Cullum and his six Mountie novels, the first appearing in 1903, and Harold Bindloss whose *Winston of the Prairies* and *Delilah of the Snows* (both 1907) are often cited as among the most typical of Mountie-glorifying novels.

The British, as Walden has pointed out, saw the Mounties as bold individuals who reflected Anglo greatness, agents of order on the exciting, outlying frontiers of the Empire. Imperialistic books, like those written by Rudyard Kipling, became very popular shortly after the Force was formed, another reason the Mounties were revered so quickly in the old country. The fact that they wore the red coats of the Empire and reputedly deported themselves like frontier British gentlemen also couldn't have hurt.



But the Mounties were made for Americans. Obsessed by their own western frontier and enamoured of the deeds of their cowboys, they found in Mountie stories a sort of upscale cowboy on a frontier that, unlike their own, was still mostly untamed. "Part cowboy with his horse and his hat," commented Walden, "part detective in his efforts to solve mysterious crimes, ... part loner who reaffirmed the virtues of individual courage and initiative, ... he was a perfect dime-novel hybrid." The Mountie began slowly in American fiction, appearing in bit parts in Jack London's *A Daughter of the Snows* (1902), but then becoming very popular in the work of James Oliver Curwood (*Steele of the Royal Mounted,* 1911) and James B. Hendryx (*Snowdrift,* 1922). Americans tended to turn Mounties into their sort of hero, paying little attention to realistic Canadian settings or attitudes, often placing their stories in the North – the scene, in their minds, of the last frontier.

Though Canadians began writing stories about their heroic mounted men early on (Ralph Connor, one of the most popular novelists in our history, wrote several, including *Corporal Cameron of the Mounties* in 1912), we warmed to our task in a typically Canadian way, becoming truly excited once others, including Americans no less, began finding them fascinating. Though the likes of Pauline Johnson and Robert Service had mentioned them, it was when boys' books about Mounties, like those by Samuel Alexander White and William Amy Lacey, began to proliferate that they really seized the public imagination. Canadians saw Mounties as frontiersmen, but also as policemen sent to bring civilization and order to their frontier. Our authors also tended to situate

A common theme dealt with the Mounties' supposedly eternal though achingly difficult commitment to choosing duty over love. The use of such themes solidified their reputation as heroes unlike anything had done before.

their heroes in the midst of actual historical events, a favourite being the Riel Rebellion. Their Mounties weren't emotional cowboys, but policemen driven by duty.

Walden points out that, despite the differences in these three views, there were many ways in which they were similar. All depicted the Mountie as a romantic character concerned with bringing justice to a young and essentially lawless land.

Mountie novels became less popular as the first half of the twentieth century wore on and by the end of the 1950s had almost disappeared, though books like the Dale of the Mounties series, written by Canadian author Joe Holliday, continued into the '60s. By the '70s almost no one wrote fiction in which Mounties appeared, except Canadians. With others having cast aside the now untenable, dated image and moved on to other, more modern adventure heroes, it was left to us to deconstruct them in novels that often portrayed them in more minor roles and in less flattering light. Witness James McNamee's *Them Damn Canadians Hanged Louis Riel* and Rudy Wiebe's *The Temptations of Big Bear.*

Nonfiction books followed similar lines, with early ones like T. Morris Longstreth's *The Silent Force* (1927) portraying them as inimitable, taciturn heroes while more contemporary works like Michael Dawson's hot-off-the-press *The Mountie From Dime Novel to Disney* (1998) presented a much more fallible and relentlessly image-conscious institution.

Radio leapt onto the Mountie bandwagon from its early days, and soon two prominent national programs were airing in the United States. *Renfrew of the Mounted,* based on the stories of Laurie York Erskine, began in 1936. It told of the noble Douglas Renfrew confronting desperadoes in the far north. He was on CBS at first and lasted for four seasons. By then *Sergeant Preston of the Yukon* (originally *Challenge of the Yukon*) was winding its way up from local radio toward a starring national 30-minute spot with ABC. Created by the same people who gave America *The Lone Ranger,* it was a big-time show that lasted until 1955. Its opening was this shy and retiring little pitch:

(Gunshot, ricochet)

ANNOUNCER: Now, as gunshots echo across the windswept, snowcovered reaches of the wild Northwest, Quaker Puffed Wheat . . .

(Gunshot, richochet)

ANNOUNCER: the breakfast cereal shot from guns . . .

(Two gunshots)

ANNOUNCER: presents, The Challenge of the Yukon!

YUKON KING: *(Bark)*

ANNOUNCER *(over wind)*: It's Yukon King, swiftest and strongest lead dog in the Northwest, blazing the trail for Sergeant Preston of the North-West Mounted Police, in his relentless pursuit of lawbreakers!

PRESTON: On, King! On, you huskies!

Preston even made it to television, with trusty Yukon King still by his side. Starring the pencil-thin-mustached Richard Simmons (no, not *that* Richard Simmons), the program lasted from 1955 to 1958 on CBS. National U.S. tele-

Redcoats—from the Bargain Bin?

BILL MACKAY, curator of the RCMP Museum in Regina, reveals an interesting fact about the Mounties' famous scarlet tunic. Official word has always been that the governor general, Lord Dufferin, wanted the police to wear the imperial red of the Empire; this way the NWMP would be easily distinguishable from the U.S. Cavalry, who wore a more traditional police blue. But Mackay thinks there may be more to the story: "I ran across a little document. It just so happened that Osborne Smith, the district commander of the province of Manitoba, had 700-plus unwanted red Norfolk jackets. . . . What a great opportunity to dump them off to the new boys on the block and to meet the needs of a governor general who wanted red uniforms." And they probably got a deal.

To this day, RCMP headquarters receives letters from children in Great Britain and elsewhere saying they want to come to Canada and become red-jacketed Mounties. Others write to complain that they visited Canada and didn't see a single Mountie, not knowing that the famous red uniforms haven't been worn in action since the 1930s.

vision would not see another Mountie until Benton Fraser in the 1990s. At home they occasionally popped up on the tube, in such roles as Gordon Pinsent's tough-but-fair Sergeant Brian Scott on *The Forest Rangers* in the 1960s.

But it was in the movies, in Hollywood's movies, that the Mounties really hit their stride, rendered so matchlessly mythic that we still cannot knock them off that pedestal. As Pierre Berton asserted in *Hollywood's Canada,* it was actually a strange, Americanized Mountie who towered above us on the screen.

Writing in 1975, Berton pointed out that Hollywood had made 256 movies about the Mounties, almost half of all the films they had generated about Canada up until that time. Beginning in the earliest days of the silent screen, with such titles as *The Darling of the Mounties* in 1912 to John Ford's *North of Hudson Bay* with Tom Mix in 1923, Americans put some of their biggest box-office people into scarlet and gold. Mix was a cowboy hero, and it was assumed that he could move seamlessly into a Mountie movie. In 1928 the first *Rose Marie* was made, with Joan Crawford; eight years later the second and most celebrated was released, with Nelson Eddy and Jeanette MacDonald in starring roles and James Stewart supporting. Other prominent films were *Renfrew of the Royal Mounted* in 1937, *Susannah of the Mounties* in 1939 with Shirley Temple and Randolph Scott, Cecil B. DeMille's *North West Mounted Police* in 1940 with Gary Cooper, *Gene Autry and the Mounties* in 1951, and *Saskatchewan* in 1954 with Alan Ladd. By the '60s, Hollywood had begun to lose interest.

Almost every one of these films was witheringly bad. And not just in terms of their dramatic qualities. Hollywood got everything wrong about the Mounties, or almost everything. The uniforms were often wrong, the chevrons upside down, the men were called Trooper or Private instead of Constable; they were pictured riding off to nab their villains while singing at the top of their lungs or graced by a backdrop of Rocky Mountains ... in Saskatchewan. And, much to the disgust of the RCMP, they were often portrayed as a force that loved gunplay and often opposed an enemy distinctly French Canadian (Cecil B. DeMille's grotesque of Louis Riel was something to behold). And melodramatic formulas were constantly repeated. For example, Berton found more than 30 incidences of a Mountie being forced by duty to bring in someone associated with his sweetheart, all the way from her father, her brother, "the man his sweetheart really loves," the poor sweetheart herself, to even her twin brother. This was part of a common theme that dealt with the Mounties' supposedly eternal though achingly difficult commitment to choosing duty over love. It isn't surprising that the RCMP often tried to disassociate itself from Hollywood. But the use of such themes as duty over love touches upon something that American filmmakers invariably did for (or to) our Mounties. It solidified their reputation as heroes unlike anything had done before. That image of matinee idols dressed in scarlet has stayed with us.

Since the death of the Mountie movie, the Force's image has been brought down to earth, and sometimes even lower. A character by the name of Dudley Do-Right began appearing on *The Bullwinkle Show* during that cartoon's 1959 to 1973 stint on American television. Dudley was a square-jawed Mountie of unerring stupidity and self-righteous moral fibre, who spent his time ineptly pursuing the nefarious Snidely Whiplash and annoying his sweetheart Nell, the daughter of his boss Inspector Fenwick. The beautiful Nell loved someone else ... Dudley's horse. Dudley's existence reflected not only the modern age's desire to deconstruct heroes, but how ridiculously high on the pedestal Mounties had ascended. They were an irresistible target.

From about 1960 forward it became difficult to depict a Mountie without at least a little satire, or gritty realism. From Broadfoot's unheroic Renfrew and his dog, Cuddles, to clueless Mounties Ed Codner and Ed Cochrane ("We're the special Eds!") on CBC's *This Hour Has 22 Minutes,* we

James Newill played Sergeant Renfrew of the Royal Mounted in a series of films in the late-1930s. The Renfrew character first appeared in the novels of Laurie York Erskine in the early 1920s, aired on radio in 1936, and made his way to the silver screen in 1938. It was decades before he would surface again on television, lampooned by Dave Broadfoot of CBC's Royal Canadian Air Farce.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF CANADA / NFA 6904

THE RCMP MUSEUM

Nelson Eddy serenades Jeannette MacDonald with the "Indian Love Call" in MGM's 1936 Rose Marie, *considered by many to be the quintessential Mountie film.* Rose Marie *originally debuted as a musical-theatre production by Oscar Hammerstein in 1924; other film versions appeared in 1928 and 1954.*

R-34

Dudley Do-Right, the lovely Nell, and the nefarious Snidely Whiplash.

enjoy poking fun at them. On *North of 60,* RCMP officers have shed the scarlet, the manliness, and the heroism.

It seems obvious we can no longer look upon the Mounties as perfect beings. They are the daily police force in all of our provinces but two (Ontario and Quebec), ordinary-looking cops who give you speeding tickets or bother you in some other way. In Quebec, they tend to be seen as very Anglo police anyway, and historically their role in the Riel situation and pursuit of French-Canadian villains in the movies does little to help their image there. Add to this the whole nation's awakening to their less-than-perfect record in the opening of the West and recent revelations about wrongdoing in Quebec, bungling in the Airbus scandal, and the fact that they are today that perpetually questioned, undemocratic institution–a secret service–and you have a Mountie thrown from his horse, as it were.

Constable Benton Fraser, played by Paul Gross in **Due South:** *he's a Mountie.*

It also seems that a favourite preoccupation of writers in this postmodernist age has become the examination of a perceived duality in the Mounties: their image versus their reality. It's becoming nearly as talked about as the old heroism. Walden does this as well as anyone, theorizing that the Mounties appeared at a perfect time. Just as society was undergoing a change to a more complicated, urban, and secularized state, they came along representing the comforting, older way of individualism and firmly held beliefs. He also discusses concepts of heroes and myths and explains how the Mounties fit into those roles. Their apparent character, sense of duty, social responsibility, good breeding, well-roundedness, and birth in the wide-open, unspoiled space of the West all fit them to their mythic role.

Dawson, in his book, agrees with much of what Walden says, but takes a slightly more critical stance, stressing the phoniness of their image and putting a great deal of focus on how the RCMP reworked it into a politically correct one during their 1973 centennial year, retaining bravery and decency but incorporating a fabricated concept of historical Mounties as non-imperialistic, friends of natives, non-racist and nonsexist. He argues that this paved the way for the 1995 purchase of the marketing rights to their image by the Disney Corporation. This monster-sized, so-called "family-oriented" company would likely not have wanted to be associated with the questionable image that grew after midcentury, but this cleaned-up one, Dawson says, is more attractive. He discusses how the RCMP now uses their old uniform to promote their image worldwide and concludes by arguing that today the Mountie image is barely more than a marketing tool. "Unhindered by the Force's past role in many of the most controversial events in Canada's history, the Mountie is now consumed with the same lack of historical contemplation that greets a cup of coffee or a bag of potato chips." He feels that Canadians need to "interrogate" the myth of the Mountie more, and that doing so would be the sign of a "healthy" nation.

But something about that analysis seems off the mark. Canadians are expert at tearing apart any prospective hero who dares to pop his/her head above the snow. The Mounties have survived this. We still feel some pride in them, but not because of blind acceptance. Only the most naive of us would assume that they have done no wrong and that they do not try to project to us the best possible image of themselves, even a somewhat fabricated, corporate one. Most of us understand, for example, that their role as the police force of earlier governments made them party to pushing natives onto reservations; but we also know that our western and gold-rush history was indeed less bloody than that of our neighbour's, who used an army to deal with the same situations and apparent "enemies." The Mounties, however flawed, deserve some credit for that.

More important, most of us see the image for what it is: a *reflection* of a reality, not reality itself. Setting aside the cops and the secret service we have to deal with today, we still admire the historical image of the Mounties and see in their relative sense of decency and their relatively bloodless approach something that was, and is, distinctly Canadian. We see something to strive toward. Perhaps even something noble in us, dare we say. Myths, understood as myths, are not necessarily, or completely, bad.

Whatever Disney may or may not do to the Mounties, sanitize them, or Americanize them (as if that's something new), or make them just another corporate symbol, it is doubtful that they can ever affect the essence of what a man dressed in scarlet and gold and a Stetson means to a Canadian. When a ship captain on *Due South,* responds to questions about who is the most believable man onboard by turning an upward glance and exclaiming, "Look at him! He's a *Mountie!*" we laugh at ourselves, but we feel good about it too. ◆

Shane Peacock is a Toronto-based freelance writer and frequent contributor to The Beaver.

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ALLIANCE COMMUNICATIONS

THE INVASION OF THE YUKON

by David Ricardo Williams

IN 1901, A CLANDESTINE AMERICAN ORGANIZATION, THE ORDER OF THE MIDNIGHT SUN, THREATENED TO INVADE THE YUKON. IT DREW SUPPORT FROM AMERICAN MINERS, SKAGWAY MERCHANTS, AND THOSE SEEKING A SOLUTION TO THE FESTERING BOUNDARY DISPUTE BETWEEN CANADA AND ALASKA. MUCH TIME, ENERGY AND MONEY WAS SPENT BY OTTAWA AND THE NWMP IN PREPARATION FOR THE ATTACK.

In the autumn of 1901, Inspector Cortlandt Starnes of the North-West Mounted Police detachment at Dawson, Yukon Territory, received some alarming information. An organization known as The Order of the Midnight Sun had been newly formed, with the avowed intention of invading the Yukon Territory from Alaska and establishing an American republic. The initial reports revealed that a considerable number – never exactly quantified – of Americans, from the mining community and other elements, had enrolled in the Order, with many adherents from Skagway and other Alaskan points along the Yukon River. The

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF CANADA / C-021869

Skagway, Alaska, c. 1898: a fertile field for enrollment by the Order.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF CANADA / C-044904

Lt.-Col. A.P. Sherwood, 1908. As commissioner of the Dominion Police, he was one of the first officers responsible for Canada's security and intelligence operations. Later, during the First World War, he would head Canada's secret service.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF CANADA / PA-187297

Fred Clark, secretary and effective head of The Order of the Midnight Sun.

organization was led, so Starnes was told, by two Americans, H. Grehl and Fred Clark (the latter apparently the man in charge). Initially, all the Order's enrollment, accounting, and membership records (including information on those who did not reside in the region, but elsewhere in the United States) were kept at Dawson. When Grehl and Clark learned that the NWMP were alive to their activities, however, they swiftly transferred the Order's headquarters to Skagway, well out of reach of the Canadian authorities.

Starnes took these reports and the threat of invasion very seriously indeed, passing on his worries to his superior at Whitehorse, Superintendent P.G.H. Primrose. Starnes told Primrose that he had learned of a conspiracy by a "secret organization [The Order of the Midnight Sun]" that

> *intended to take possession of the Yukon Territory, their plans being to rush Whitehorse, take the smaller detachments along the [Yukon] river and then, as they were aware that the police in the Yukon only numbers about 200, with their number it would then be an easy matter to take the barracks at Dawson. This organization has representatives at both Seattle and Skagway and their plans are nearly complete.*

In turn, Primrose reported to his superiors in Ottawa what they had learned about the organization and their fears of an armed invasion. Even at that early stage, Primrose recommended that the garrison at Whitehorse be increased by 60 men, who would be sent into the area in dribs and drabs so as not to attract the attention of the Order. Primrose gave the following appraisal:

> *I do not consider myself an alarmist, but I always believe in being prepared. I do not think these people could possibly head us off, but at the same time I consider it advisable that the 60 men necessary to bring up to the strength and allow for withdrawals during the winter should be sent in before the close of navigation* without fail *[his emphasis] and also the men necessary to complete each division.*

The men were sent, and for the next eight months, until May of 1902, much time, energy, and money was spent preparing to repel a threatened invasion, to identify and investigate the Order's membership, and to look into its financial resources.

Virtually everybody in authority became involved in the affair: the NWMP, through Fred White, its comptroller and administrative head in Ottawa; the Dominion Police, headed by the redoubtable Lt.-Col. A.P. Sherwood; and Clifford Sifton, the minister of the interior, who was constantly consulted and directly involved in specific matters, such as the reinforcement of the garrison at Whitehorse. Prime Minister Sir Wilfrid Laurier was also kept abreast of developments, and personally authorized the expenditure of funds to acquire the records of the Order. Copies of important memoranda were forwarded to the governor general to keep him informed. All in all, it was an extraordinary response to what, in the end, proved an ephemeral threat.

Several factors led to the formation of the Order and made enrollment comparatively easy. To start with, the boundary between Alaska and Yukon was still uncertain, and there were constant squabbles over its position. In 1901 no one knew that the Alaska Boundary Tribunal would be sitting two years later to settle the question, and many Americans saw an invasion as a solution, albeit a violent one, to the boundary problem. Although it had nothing to do with the boundary as such, an episode in Skagway, in which an American cut down the British flag fly-

ing over the Canadian customs house, injected some ginger into members of the Order.

There were two principal factors that contributed to the Americans' actions: the discontent of Skagway merchants, and perceived discrimination among Canadian mining officials.

Skagway merchants were experiencing a loss of business, the result of the downturn of mining in Dawson. Skagway had been the major point of entry for gold seekers during the Klondike gold rush. It was estimated that some $7 million annually in goods and freight arrived in Skagway to be transshipped to Whitehorse over the White Pass and Yukon Railway, which had been completed in 1900. Of this, a relatively small portion originated from American points; the bulk of the merchandise was shipped from Canadian ports. When the merchants of Skagway, already suffering from a decrease in business, heard rumours that the Canadian government was going to subsidize a railway from eastern Canada into the Yukon, they feared that Skagway would wither on the vine. Thus, they provided a fertile field for enrollment by the Order.

Secondly, the American miners in Dawson had various grievances, some of them well founded, about the administration and discriminatory application of the Canadian mining laws. Many felt that Canadian mining officials took unfair advantage of the miners' alien status in their decisions. When, for example, a question arose about a boundary between two adjoining claims, Canadian miners were invariably favoured over their American counterparts.

Not long after Superintendent Primrose had dispatched to Ottawa his and Starnes's appraisals of the situation, there followed the most bizarre episode of the entire affair. Primrose decided that he would travel to Skagway in plain clothes to mount an undercover operation. His mission was to ferret out information about the extent of the organization and its membership in Skagway. He was accompanied by an unsavoury character by the name of J.H. Seeley, one of those people who tend to pop up during police operations as a paid informer. Seeley had insinuated himself into the confidence of Inspector Starnes, who apparently sanctioned Seeley's journey with Primrose to Skagway. The two men got on the train in Whitehorse, and by the time they reached Lake Bennett both had been drinking heavily. When they disembarked at Skagway, they were in even worse shape. Primrose, accompanied by Seeley, went from bar to bar in a drunken state, talking to barflies in an attempt to gain information from them about the Order and its two leaders. In this he was singularly unsuccessful. At one bar he accosted an American officer and his wife whom, in the officer's presence, he insulted. The officer, reacting in high dudgeon, gave Primrose "a licking" as the Skagway newspaper subsequently reported. Primrose was arrested and spent the night in jail. The following morning he was brought before the magistrate and fined $10. Until his appearance in court, his true identity was unknown. When the account of the episode appeared in the Skagway newspaper, the Dawson police sent a copy to Ottawa, where it was received with enormous embarrassment. One might have thought that Primrose would have been drummed out of the force, but in fact he was not; he maintained his rank of superintendent but was transferred from Whitehorse to Dawson (a lesser position). Soon after, he was transferred to Fort Macleod, Alberta, where he finished his career.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF CANADA / C-42768

Inspector Cortlandt Starnes, seated at left, with a group of his men at Dawson, 1900. Starnes, the first to learn of the conspiracy, immediately acted on reports of the threatened invasion.

Some months later, Pinkerton's National Detective Agency in Seattle, who had been consulted by one of Sherwood's undercover agents, told Sherwood that based on information received from Skagway, it was possible Primrose had been set up. It was more likely that Primrose, in a misguided action, was genuinely attempting to get information. There may be something in this; it is difficult, otherwise, to explain how Primrose retained his rank. Gathering undercover information while drunk may be excusable, but insulting the wife of an American officer? Pinkerton's had been consulted by Sherwood, who often used the agency for his investigations. It is a nice irony that Pinkerton's, a purely American institution, was advising Canadian government officials on plans by Americans to invade Canada.

Not long after Primrose's escapade, Inspector Horrigan travelled, sober, from Dawson to Skagway to meet with local officials and representatives of the United States government, including the District Court judge. This was an amicable meeting. The consensus was that the threat by the Order was an idle one that could never be carried out. This meeting was widely reported in the Seattle, San Francisco, and Ottawa newspapers. The *Seattle Evening Times* reported that

> *The so-called conspiracy with the object of establishing a republic in the Yukon Territory has been known by the Mounted Police for several months past, but it was considered too much of a bubble to be taken seriously; in fact it would be an insult to the better elements of citizens of the United States who are living in the Yukon to assume they would be party to such a scheme. The Mounted Police have dealt with the matter as one of the many subjects for inquiry which come under their attention and the bubble appears to have been burst by an officer of the force [Horrigan] visiting Skagway in the U.S. territory in search of further information.*

Although this appeared to be the conclusion of the matter, it was not. For another six months the NWMP actively pursued its investigation of the Order's activities.

A.E. Snyder had succeeded Primrose as Superintendent at Whitehorse, and he was not prepared to dismiss the plot as shadowboxing. Early in January 1902, he reported to Ottawa that the threat was real, but with diligent police work (keeping malcontents under surveillance for example), the threat could be contained. Snyder was instructed "to take necessary steps by palisade or otherwise to protect Whitehorse barracks against attack." As a result of Snyder's letter, White, the civilian head of the force, launched four separate investigations into the Order to determine its strength, its finances, and the likelihood of an invasion.

To start, he dispatched Superintendent Charles Constantine to Whitehorse. Constantine had been the first superintendent of the Yukon Territory when the NWMP started policing the area in 1895. Although his arrival might have put the noses out of joint of the other senior officers at Whitehorse and Dawson, it quickly became clear that Constantine's role was a military rather than a policing one, and he would not interfere in any way with the day-to-day administration of the force.

Constantine was mainly occupied with reinforcing the garrisons at Whitehorse and Dawson. By 1901, stimulated by the completion of the railway from Skagway the year before, Whitehorse had become the more important centre of population, supplanting Dawson. At the time Whitehorse had a population of just under 1,000. Approximately half were British subjects but the figure included some 90 members of the NWMP stationed there. Constantine laid out defensive works to protect the Whitehorse and Dawson barracks; he drew plans for the deployment of the reinforced police forces in the Yukon, amounting to perhaps 300 in all; he drew up a nominal roll

W.J. TOPLEY / NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF CANADA / PA-027943

Clifford Sifton, Minister of the Interior, 1900. Perhaps best known for his vigorous promotion of settlement in the West, Sifton became administrator of the Yukon during the gold rush.

of British subjects in the area who had military experience and would serve voluntarily in the event of an actual attack. He was also to keep a sharp eye on the movement of people over the trail from Skagway to Whitehorse. In effect, he was setting up a spy network. He was also directed by Sifton to place undercover people on the trains to keep an eye on the employees, many of whom were American. (This followed an unsuccessful attempt to forbid American train employees from entering Canada, so the next best thing was to spy on them). Constantine saw to it that there was sufficient ammunition and small arms for a force of some 300 people at least. As well, two Maxim machine-guns were brought in and placed at Whitehorse and Dawson. As part of the defensive measures around the barracks, Constantine had palisades erected and held regular gun drills.

There was a feeling among merchants that, if the Order succeeded in capturing the Yukon as a United States territory, it would be their salvation.

In addition to his duties in the Yukon, Constantine was instructed by White and Sherwood to contact Pinkerton's at their offices in Seattle and San Francisco. In preparation, Sherwood had contacted the detective agency's New York office to make the necessary arrangements in Seattle and San Francisco. He wanted to ensure that their operatives would be available to consult with Constantine and, later, Rufus G. Chamberlin, Sherwood's principal undercover officer.

Thus Constantine, once he had discharged his military role in the Yukon, assumed an investigative one. After leaving Whitehorse, he learned that an impecunious lawyer at Skagway supposedly had in his possession all the enrollment and financial records of the Order and was prepared to betray his colleagues by selling them. Constantine sent word immediately to Ottawa that he thought the papers could be obtained for the sum of $500. Laurier personally authorized the expenditure, but by the time Whitehorse authorities received approval, the lawyer had changed his mind. Constantine then made his way down the coast to Seattle where, as instructed, he called on Pinkerton's. Pinkerton's had never conducted any investigation into the affair in the Yukon, but on the instruction of their head office in New York, started looking into it in the United States. They did uncover some useful information to pass on to Constantine about the general state of affairs in Skagway, both among the general citizenry and the Order members. It was to Constantine that Pinkerton's mentioned the apparent justification for Primrose's loutish behaviour in Skagway. Constantine continued on to the Pinkerton office in San Francisco, but learning nothing new, returned to Ottawa.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF CANADA / PA-122800

The North-West Mounted Police performing gun drill at their barracks in Whitehorse, c. 1900.

The next investigator, if one could call him that, was Seeley, the informer who had accompanied Primrose on his drunken spree. Seeley, motivated only by money, had been given virtual carte blanche by Inspector Starnes, much to the regret of the Force. He roamed up and down the coast from Skagway south, running up large expense accounts (mostly in the form of bar bills). Eventually, even Starnes saw through him and called a halt to his services, whereupon Seeley presented an enormous account. Ottawa officials refused to pay, but Seeley was persistent. He pestered them until eventually, in exasperation, Fred White wrote to Superintendent Z.T. Wood (then the superintendent at Dawson) asking him to settle with Seeley on any terms that he could. There is no official record of how much Seeley actually received.

A much more credible private investigator, dispatched by Sherwood, was E.F. Drake, a gentleman adventurer of British background. He visited Whitehorse, Dawson, Skagway, Seattle, and San Francisco. Drake concluded that at the time Starnes initially became alarmed, the Order was functioning and did have a considerable number of members. When Drake reported to Sherwood in early 1902, he felt the Order no longer posed any threat to British interests in the Yukon.

The final investigation was carried out by Chamberlin. He was Sherwood's right-hand man when it came to undercover investigations. Chamberlin covered much the same ground as Constantine and worked with Pinkerton's in both Seattle and San Francisco. Pinkerton's had managed to track down Fred Clark, the Order's leader, in eastern Washington, and sent an undercover agent to talk to him in May 1902. Clark spoke as if the Order was still very much alive, with the

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support of two United States senators and large numbers of men willing to take up arms in the cause. After giving various, though rather vague, details of the Order's organization, Clark told the Pinkerton man, "Now, if you will think the matter over carefully, you can see how practical the movement is; after thinking it over, let me know it you are willing to join." In another conversation, Clark spoke of assuming "the obligations of the old Order," saying that "if the thing succeeds, give them [the original members] bonds on the new republic for the amounts due as was contemplated when the money was given." It appears that as far as Clark was concerned, the Order was not dead. Indeed, a month earlier in the Yukon, Constantine had been told that the Order might be resurrected under another name, which lends support to Clark's views.

But it never happened. The Order of the Midnight Sun was indeed dead, never to be resurrected. No invasion was launched; no hostile forces crossed into Canada, no shots were fired in anger, nor did an insurrection occur from within. Notwithstanding, the Canadian officials, police, and government had given the affair a great deal of attention, motivated by the fear that such events might come to pass. After all the reports from his four investigators were in hand, Fred White summed up the situation to his minister, Clifford Sifton: "The substance of these various reports points to the conception, organization, and manipulation of the Order of the Midnight Sun by a few men without standing or reputation in the community, and solely for the purposes of personal gain."

Yet, and his remark is typical of the police's ambivalent attitude to the threat, White said there were Skagway merchants who were still "in a state of desperation by business passing their doors." There was still a feeling among merchants that, if the Order succeeded in capturing the Yukon as a United States territory, it would be their salvation. For that reason, White told Sifton, the Force was continuing surveillance on the most prominent of those merchants, who "will still bear watching," but agreed the overall operation should be wound down to end "continuation of large expenditure." Sifton read White's memorandum, initialled it with his characteristic flamboyant flourish, and placed it in the file.

The sun had set on The Order of the Midnight Sun. ◆

David Ricardo Williams is the author of numerous biography and history books. His latest work, Call in Pinkerton's: American Detectives at Work for Canada, *will be published by Dundurn Press in the fall of 1998.*

Three on the RCMP

BY JOHN E. RELIGA

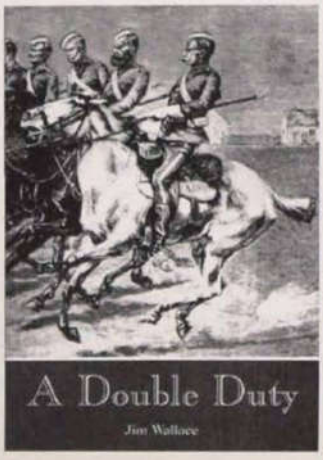
A DOUBLE DUTY
By Jim Wallace
Bunker to Bunker Books
Winnipeg, Manitoba, 1997
pp. 278, illus. 8" x 10"
$24.95 paper

RED COATS ON THE PRAIRIES
By William Beahen and Stan Horrall
Printwest
Regina, Saskatchewan, 1998
pp. 400, illus. 8 1/2" x 11"
French and English editions
$59.95 hardcover

THE MOUNTIES: AS THEY SAW THEMSELVES
By William Kelly
The Golden Dog Press
Ottawa, Ontario, 1996
pp. 340, 6" x 9"
$21.95 paper

Three very different books on Canada's Mounted Police have recently hit the bookstores.

Double Duty reviews the first decade of the North-West Mounted Police. The author assembled information from many sources and put together an interesting narrative covering the formation of the NWMP through to the Force establishing itself in the West. It begins with the Hudson's Bay Company transferring its sovereign powers in the West to the Dominion of Canada. Author Jim Wallace examines the political considerations that went into determining whether the government needed a military or police force for the task – the double duty referred to in the title – to bring law and order to this territory. After an act of Parliament created the NWMP in 1873, the prime minister, after much deliberation, appointed George French as its first permanent commissioner.



Initially, the narrative did not capture my interest, but this changed as I read about the logistics of moving 300 men, nearly 300 hundred horses, and more than 100 tons of supplies and equipment from Toronto to Manitoba, the NWMP's first headquarters. Then came a detailed description of the overland march to the foothills of the Rocky Mountains. The members manhandled wagons out of bogs and up the sides of ravines and built roads over impassable terrain. Dust, mosquitoes, flying ants, and grasshoppers were a torment, and many members came down with dysentery and typhoid fever. Often, food ran low and they had no water fit to drink. On very cold nights, the men gave up their blankets to the horses. Once, despite having no fuel to cook on or keep warm, French would not let the men burn surplus carts because these were government property.

The stories about setting up the Force's first posts provide absorbing reading. Some of the incidents described are humorous as well as informative, such as the time recruits put their tents up on an old campground and became infested with lice. Most members washed their clothes in juniper oil, while others, using a trick learned from the Métis, spread their clothes over anthills. Later, they built Swan River Barracks on vast dens of garter snakes. When spring arrived, the members found snakes everywhere, indoors and out. The author also describes encounters with Canadian Indians and the Sioux from the United States. More interesting was the author's review of the administrative problems faced by the members, and the deteriorating relationship between the government, Commissioner French, and later, Commissioners Macleod and Irvine.

The author has enhanced the narrative by including 20 historical pictures and three maps. The maps would have been more informative, however, if the author had included on them more of the places and routes mentioned in the book. As well, some stories were left unfinished. For example, the author tells about French placing Inspector Richer under arrest for gross insubordination over a problem with a team of horses, yet does not say what happened to Richer. Through my own research I learned that French had not placed Richer under arrest, but had only suspended him. After requesting permission to resign his commission, Richer was discharged on August 12, 1874.

Red Coats On The Prairies is a thorough examination of the NWMP covering the West's transition from an open frontier to a civilized territory while Lawrence Herchmer was commissioner, 1886 to 1900. Written by William Beahen, current RCMP historian, and Stan Horrall, who recently retired from the position, the book is structured in two parts – *Taming the Frontier* and *All Sorts and Conditions of Men*. Part 1, a chronological account, looks at the different problems and issues that surfaced during the period. During Herchmer's command, the government assigned the NWMP many nonpolice duties. These included issuing relief supplies, distributing seed grain, acting as labour mediators, fighting grass fires, setting up and guarding quarantine camps, quarantining cattle, delivering mail, acting as temporary custodians for mental patients, and

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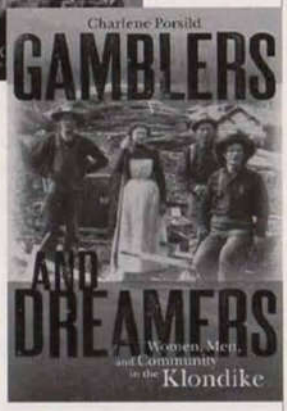

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more. With the arrival of large numbers of settlers, liquor and prostitution surfaced as major problems that the NWMP had to deal with in the face of public resistance and indifference.

The authors also discuss how the government tried to force the Indians to adopt the ways of the white people by giving up their culture and taking up agriculture. Then, before the Indians had learned to provide for themselves, the government reduced their rations, supposedly to encourage their self-sufficiency, and prohibited them from holding traditional ceremonies. As part of the government's indoctrination policy, it made Indian children attend government/church schools. Yet despite these policies, the Mounted Police only had to deal with infrequent acts of violence by native people. The authors provide ample evidence that white men caused most of the trouble dealt with by the Mounted Police from 1886 to 1900.

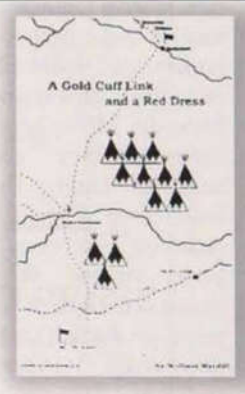
Red Coats on the Prairies made me realize just how badly the government had mismanaged its policy concerning natives in western Canada, yet how the lives of the natives would have been much worse had it not been for intercession by the NWMP.

As the West grew, murders, sexual assaults, and spousal/child abuse became common. Still, the most pressing problem was the theft of livestock. The NWMP also encountered white-collar crime in the late 1880s. A sting operation that involved fake gold bricks and the Molson's Bank in Calgary in 1897 called to mind the recent Bre-X gold scandal.

The book also provides insight into the personality of Commissioner Herchmer and presents a compelling picture of how lies, half-truths and a few facts nearly ended his career. The authors describe how Herchmer fought budget cuts, downsizing, and a push to disband the NWMP. After gold was discovered in the Yukon, the government further diminished Herchmer's authority and figuratively slapped him in the face by having the commanding officer in the Yukon report directly to Ottawa and not to Herchmer.

While Part 1 looks at the NWMP in its operational role, Part 2, *All Sorts and Conditions of Men,* examines the administrative aspects of the Force. The authors cover everything from the recruiting of members to the cost of burying them. Each chapter examines a different topic, such as the qualifications for enlistment, pay and benefits, kit and clothing, firearms, food and accommodations, church parades, social life, marriage, desertion, discipline and ceremonial functions. While administrative topics can make for dull reading, the authors avoided this by including many engaging stories. I was particularly interested in how the administrative policies and procedures differed from when I joined the RCMP seventy years later. Many remained the same.

The following questions give some idea of the variety of interesting information that can be found in Part 2. What expense did new officers incur that took half their first year's salary? Why did Herchmer order commanding officers to buy a supply of cod-fishing line and stain it with coffee? What killed 23 members between 1886 and



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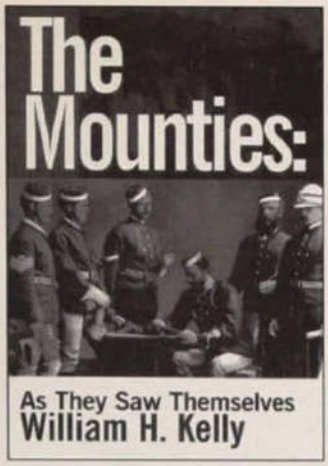


1900? Why were a member's boots placed backwards in the stirrups of the saddle on a horse during his funeral procession? Why did Herchmer feel that married noncommissioned officers, particularly sergeants, had become an "intolerable nuisance" in the Force? How much coffee was in a member's daily ration in 1882? What did convicts, Indian children in industrial schools, and U.S. troops have that the members of the NWMP did not? Why did the NWMP replace artillery with machine guns? What were the two most common accusations made against members? What led to the Force's most serious mutiny in history in 1886? The answers can be found in this thoroughly researched book.

The Mounties: As They Saw Themselves consists of 43 short stories about the Mounted Police from 1873 to modern times. These were selected from past issues of the *RCMP Quarterly*, a magazine published by the RCMP since 1933. It is divided into seven sections: *The Prairies, Personalities, The North, Humour, RCMP In Wartime, Horses,* and *Policework*. With more than 60 years of stories to choose from, it would have been interesting to know why the editor selected the stories he did.

The Prairies provides graphic accounts of life in the NWMP during the 1870s and 1880s. The planning undertaken for the visit of the governor general to the West in 1881 makes a similar task today look inconsequential. I was captivated by a story in *Personalities* called "The Northern Men." This compelling story describes how men with no medical skills amputated the leg of a member's wife after dogs had torn it to the bone. She died while her husband was still away on patrol. It continues with a graphic description of patrols labouring under the worst arctic conditions. This story, and "An Arctic Expedition" in *The North* section, are the most intense stories in the book. They provide a powerful description of raw courage in the face of every kind of adversity.

Humour included stories more nostalgic than humorous. *The RCMP In Wartime* covers the role of the Mounted Police in the two world wars. There are three stories about horses, in the section of the same name, with one that describes the origin of the Musical Ride. *Policework* covers several noteworthy RCMP cases that involve bank robbers, spies, drug traffickers, and police dogs. One intriguing story describes an investigation into the murder of an anti-Nazi German prisoner of war in a Canadian interment camp full of pro-Nazi POWs.

I have no hesitation recommending all three books. All are interesting and thought-provoking. *A Double Duty* and *Red Coats on the Prairies* complement each other chronologically. *A Double Duty* provides an interesting and concise overview of the first decade of the NWMP, as the Force brought law and order to the West. *Red Coats on the Prairies* is a thorough and entertaining look at the operational and administrative workings of the NWMP from 1886 to 1900 as people began to settle in the West. I have yet to read a book about the Mounted Police that is as comprehensive and interesting as this one. In my view, all serving members of the RCMP should add it to their reading list. *A Double Duty* and *Red Coats on the Prairies* left me with one question. Would things be different in the Mounted Police and the West today if the government had not interfered politically in the operation of the NWMP?

The Mounties: As They Saw Themselves is an omnibus of short, engaging stories about the Mounted Police during the past 125 years. It is a good book to take on a trip or have on a bedside table.

Supt. John E. Religa (RCMP – Rtd.) served in the RCMP from 1953 until 1994. He is the author of Behind the Scenes, *a book about his training and first 17 years of service in Newfoundland. He lives in Gloucester, Ontario.*

Immigrant stories on the small screen

BY PETER STEVEN

A SCATTERING OF SEEDS
The Creation of Canada
Thirteen-part documentary television series, Produced by White Pine Pictures, History Television, and Vision TV, 1998.

The fragile voice of an Irish-Canadian woman from Quebec sings fragments of "Danny Boy." A 1944 army newsreel presents interviews of Chinese-Canadian veterans of the Pacific war. These are hardly the staples of conventional history. They do turn up, however, as vignettes in a new television series about Canada's first immigrants called *A Scattering of Seeds*.

Many of Canada's key immigrant groups – Acadians, Germans, and Japanese, for instance – are represented. In each film, the experience of the large group is focused through the eyes of one member from that community. Each film has a different director, and this seems fitting. The series thus involves many artists but also provides a range of styles and possibilities for creating history on film.

The Road Chosen, by Keith Lock (Part 3 of the series), tells the story of Lem Wong, a 16-year-old immigrant who pulled himself up from laundry scrubboy in the Cape Breton mines to become the owner of a prestigious nightclub in London, Ontario. "Some would say that's not much of a journey," says Lock. "But Lem's success was measured by his character and his love for his children. He laid the foundation for a new generation." Indeed. Of his

four daughters, two became doctors, one a lawyer, and one a biochemist.

Lock's film is certainly not flashy. But the life depicted is compelling and the archival footage rich with unfamiliar images; viewers might hardly notice that a complex story is being told with subtle layers of detail and nuance. One particularly rich layer comes from a 1934 Canadian film that Lock managed to pry from the National Archives of Canada, called *The Secrets of Chinatown*. This odd little piece of Canadiana, fragments of which Lock inserts at key moments in his film, exposes the "bruising stereotypes" swirling around Lem and other Chinese Canadians in the '30s. Other archival footage includes the Vancouver docks of 1898; Wong as a youthful six-day bicycle rider; London, Ontario soup kitchens in the '30s; and the Army newsreels. None of this material simply illustrates the reminiscences of family or Lock's commentary. It provides emotional contact with the past, impossible to convey in words alone.

Lindalee Tracey's *The Force of Hope* (Part 2 in the series) constructs a darker history, the story of Bernard McGauran, an Irish-Canadian priest who was chaplain during the 1847 cholera epidemic at Grosse Isle, Quebec. For Tracey, history is always partly a mystery. Though her film might focus on one historical character, she insists that what he or she thought and how he or she dreamed slips beyond our grasp. Her commentary is tentative and questioning, never slick. She can only imagine the suffering of the thousands who died–lying in ships stretched two miles back from the entrance to Quebec harbour–and the anguish of the young priest. "Did your heart break, Father McGauran?" she asks. "Did you feel cursed or blessed by your distance from Ireland?"

Mr. Lem Wong, from "The Road Chosen", directed by Keith Lock

Paintings, drawings, letters, commentary, and modest scenes of reenactment each contribute a different facet to the story. A minimal and evocative soundtrack works as a suitable accompaniment to the fragments of history, and the use of dissolving, almost ghostlike figures, make this a challenging work. Though Canadians may have heard the outlines of the Irish cholera story from Susanna Moodie onward, Tracey emphasizes that the human details remain secret, now beyond us as historians.

Neither film strides headlong into new creative territory. Yet both struggle to create something fresh with low-key structures and the personal tone of their narration. Tracey admits that she doesn't know the answers, and Lock hints at his own connections to the story, finding similarities between Lem Wong and his father. Both films seem content to present unlikely heroes: a priest and a restaurant owner. Yet these portraits are far from the saccharine mode of Heritage Minutes. There's a darker tone to both directors' work, visible just below the surface. From the horrific fever ships of the St. Lawrence to *The Secrets of Chinatown*, Canadian history carries the ugly as well as the heroic. The series reminds us that the lives of immigrants contain plenty of both.

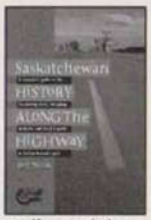
***A Scattering of Seeds* airs on History TV 9:30 CT Wednesdays until June 15. After June 15, it airs 2:30 a.m. CT Saturdays.**

Peter Steven is a historian, writer, and teacher of film history. He lives in Toronto.

Publishers' Selection

Saskatchewan History Along the Highway:
A Traveller's guide to the Fascinating Facts, Intriguing incidents and Lively Legends of Saskatchewan

by Bob Weber



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Judge Sissons's Legacy of Art

BY JOHN AYRE

IMAGES OF JUSTICE
A Legal History of the Northwest Territories as Traced through the Yellowknife Courthouse Collection of Inuit Sculpture
By Dorothy Harley Eber
McGill-Queen's University Press, Montreal and Kingston, 1997, 224 pages
$39.95 hardcover

When the federal government decided to firm up administrative control over the eastern and central Arctic in the mid-1950s, it faced the unenviable task of trying to make the Inuit behave like other Canadians, even while the Inuit continued to live a lifestyle wholly different from southerners. Weeding out practices like polygamy and the execution of dangerous people, for example, which the Inuit still tolerated, could have been demoralizing if enforced in a heavy-handed way. As a result, the Inuit were fortunate when the federal government appointed Judge Jack Sissons to cover the Far North in the crucial transition years from 1955 to 1966. A passionate believer in common law, Sissons insisted that his court travel by plane to the tiny northern communities to try cases so that local values could be heard and recognized. Beside a raft of decisions largely tolerant of native values, Sissons left another legacy; a collection of soapstone carvings, which illustrates fourteen major cases faced by Sissons and his successor, William Morrow. Using the carvings as a focal point, Dorothy Harley Eber reviews these cases in her new study, *Images of Justice*.

Although the collection has established a modest fame, it appears to have started purely by happenstance. Allan Kaotak, the defendant of Sissons's very first case in 1955, carved a sculpture of Sissons sitting in a parka at the bench. Significantly, the image of Sissons ominously looms over Kaotak's own frightened self. Although Eber spends a long and somewhat futile chapter on trying to guess how Sissons commissioned the other carvings – mostly from commercial carvers in Kugluktuk (Coppermine) – it is still largely a mystery exactly how he obtained them all. What matters, of course, is the substance of the cases themselves.

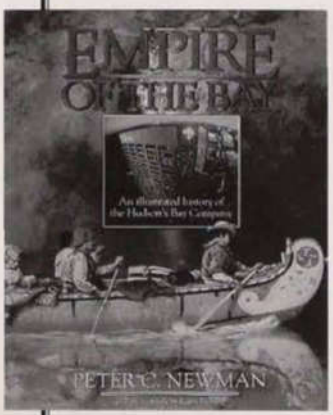
Some, like the ordeal of Kikkik and execution of Soosie, are already well known through the work of Farley Mowat and Sissons himself, from his book *Judge from the Far North*. Eber prefers to emphasize less sensational cases like the Noah's Estate decision of 1961, in which Noah's common-law wife tried to collect on his life-insurance policy after he died in a fire on the DEW Line. Arch officials wanted to block this on the flimsy pretext that his family could produce no marriage certificate. Sissons simply noted that since Noah's marriage had existed in every sense under common law, the family must receive the money.

Since many Inuit were still effectively isolated in camps without radio most of the year, it was especially important to recognize traditional values. If, for example, a violent schizophrenic like Soosie suddenly endangered life for everyone, that individual had to be executed for the better good. Eber shows that white jury members in the North were paradoxically often more understanding about this than the Inuit themselves. Because such conditions very rarely apply today, these cases now belong more to anthropological history than contemporary legal studies. To give a sense of how circumstances have radically changed, Eber has wisely added a long chapter on the dismal 1991 case of a propane sniffer called Niviaqsi Laisa at Cape Dorset, who mindlessly killed two children while under the influence.

Eber, a journalist who frequently writes on the North, handles her material in traditional magazine style. She often directly quotes those key defendants and officials who are still alive. She is effective about providing a sense of place and circumstance. Her relation of the art and the cases, though, while thematically convenient, is often too rigidly applied. While we see all the carvings, which are not particularly distinguished as either art or illustration, there are no photos either of courtroom dramas or such key figures as Kikkik, Soosie, or even Sissons himself.

John Ayre, an arts journalist living in Guelph, Ontario, is currently writing a book on the development of Inuit art.

An Illustrated History of the Hudson's Bay Company
by Peter C. Newman



This is a lavishly illustrated history of the HBC from its founding as a fur trader in 1670 to the national retail giant it is today. Dozens of full-colour and black-and-white photos, plus sketches, drawings and maps complement the spirited text by Peter C. Newman, one of Canada's leading authors and journalists. 223 pp., index, bibliography, 7-page chronology of HBC history. 9" x 12" approx., cloth.

Original publisher's price: $45
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TO ORDER SEE THE BEAVER BOOK CLUB AD ON THE INSIDE FRONT COVER

The American View of Pre-Confederation Canada, and Some Worthy Canadian Biographies

The common Canadian complaint – one that certainly predates Confederation – is that Americans think of Canada rarely, and when they do, incorrectly. It was confirmed in my mind by two recent American books. *Prologue to Manifest Destiny* deals with the era of the 1840s, when British-American relations were in constant stress, mostly over matters having to do with Canada. The book is a detailed, and at times fascinating, study, well worth pondering by all Canadians who share my interest in the tensions of those times. But it is a great pity that the authors did not ask some Canadian historian to read the manuscript prior to publication.

No Canadian would allow the sentence: "If Philadelphia was America's Cradle of Liberty, then Navy Island became the Island of Liberty for those sons of the Canadian revolution now openly boasting of casting off the imperial yoke." By then, late December 1837, the Upper Canada Rebellion was a total loss. William Lyon Mackenzie and a few dozen other rebels who had escaped to Buffalo, along with a much larger number of American volunteers, "invaded" Canada by occupying tiny Navy Island in the Niagara River. This pathetic attempt to rekindle the rebellion was only made dramatic when Canadian militiamen burned the *Caroline,* the ship supplying the island. Since the *Caroline* was an American ship in American waters and an American was killed, American passions were aroused. War with Britain seemed entirely possible until cooler heads prevailed.

Nevertheless, the book is valuable because it is so unapologetically American. For example, American negotiator Daniel Webster had in his possession a copy of an old map that clearly supported a New Brunswick/Maine boundary line far north of the one eventually agreed upon, but he kept it secret until all the documents had been signed. On the other hand, British negotiator Lord Ashburne seems hardly to have pressed Canadian interests. Indeed, during all the disputes at that time, Britain was apparently more interested in the West Indies than in Canada. At least the Oregon treaty managed to draw a line well below "fifty-four forty," and without a fight.

An American who was centrally involved in dealing with Canada throughout the whole first half of the 19th century was General Winfield Scott. It was Scott who dampened American ardour in New York and Michigan in 1838, when thousands of his countrymen were organizing to invade and liberate Canada. His success won the praise of the eminent American clergyman Channing, who dubbed Scott the "Great Pacificator." A new biography, *Agent of Destiny,* makes good reading. General Scott served under every president from Jefferson to Lincoln. His first claim to fame came in the War of 1812 where he helplessly watched the American fiasco at Queenston Heights and led the victory, of sorts, at Lundy's Lane. A tall and handsome war hero, he dreamed of becoming president, but his political senses were less sharp than his military ones.

Much as we decry American ignorance of our country, we Canadians may not be as informed about them as we think, at least for the pre-Confederation period I've just referred to. While Canadians worried about United States expansionism, Americans were almost totally preoccupied with the politics of slavery and of western rather than northern territory. For an insight into how the growing abolitionist movement completely dominated the political scene, read the splendid study *Arguing About Slavery* that describes the lively debates in Congress and the singular heroism of John Quincy Adams. Or, to understand how the West came to capture the American imagination, read *Undaunted Courage,*

Books Cited

Agent of Destiny: The Life and Times of General Winfield Scott.
By John S.D. Eisenhower. Free Press, 1997. 464 pages. $38.50 hardbound.

Arguing About Slavery: John Quincy Adams and the Great Battle in the United States Congress.
By William Lee Miller. 1997, Vintage. $23.50 softbound.

The Many Landfalls of John Cabot.
By Peter E. Pope. University of Toronto Press, 1997. 208 pages. $50.00 hardbound; $17.95 softbound.

Marguerite Bourgeoys and Montreal, 1640-1665.
By Patricia Simpson. McGill-Queens University Press, 1997. 247 pages. $49.95 hardbound; $19.95 softbound.

Prologue to Manifest Destiny: Anglo-American Relations in the 1840s.
By Howard Jones and Donald A. Rakestraw. SR Books, 1997 342 pages. US$ 50.00 hardbound; US$18.95 softbound.

Undaunted Courage: Meriwether Lewis, Thomas Jefferson, and the Opening of the American West.
By Stephen E. Ambrose. Simon & Schuster, 1996. $21.50 softbound.

the drama of the Lewis and Clark Expedition from 1803–06. Both of these superb works were American bestsellers last year, although neither received much Canadian attention.

There are also, of course, worthy Canadian biographies. When Marguerite Bourgeoys (later Saint Marguerite – three hundred years later) first sailed to Canada in 1653, on the journey she was treated with contempt, being regarded as a woman of ill repute, "especially when they knew she was coming to Canada ... the popular belief meant that she was everywhere looked upon with contempt." *Marguerite Bourgeoys and Montreal, 1640–1665,* chronicles the first half of her life, from her childhood in France and her religious experiences to her early years in Montreal where she created the first school. Caught between the fierce political rivalries of the Jesuits and the Sulpicians, she nonetheless persevered and founded one of the first uncloistered religious communities for women. She may have been a saint, but she was clearly down to earth, especially with her dedication and practical service to (and with) women. Biographer Patricia Simpson thoroughly documents all the details and all the sources, so much so that the spirit of this extraordinary personality is almost smothered out.

"The limitations and ambiguities of the documents relating to John Cabot's voyage of 1497 have provided ample opportunity for several centuries of scholarly quarrel," writes Peter Pope in a volume devoted to examining the controversy, *The Many Landfalls of John Cabot.* The author's interest is not only the controversies over where and how Cabot landed in Canada – which he settles, at least to his own satisfaction – but how the landings were remembered. "The late nineteenth century was, par excellence, the great era for the mass production of tradition ... in ceremonies, holidays, souvenirs, monuments, and so on. The very idea of celebrating centenary anniversaries in public ceremony was an innovation of the period." His book is thus a great read, not only for its remembering of Cabot, but for its examination of how Cabot has been remembered. ◆

LETTERS

More balance, please

In the early thirties I was one of six young people who founded what became the CCF youth wing (CCYM). Well, those were interesting days! The Marxists tried to capture the movement and, failing that, to kill it.

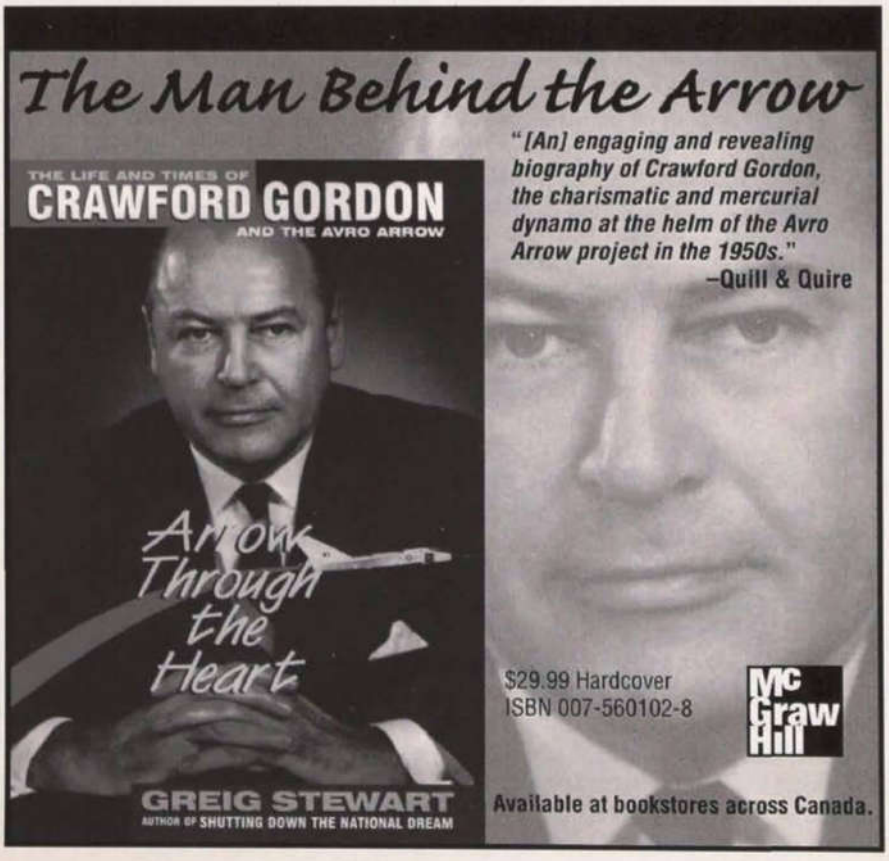
One of our local CCYM chaps went to Spain, to the Mac–Pap Battalion. I remember him well: highly idealistic, a prince of a chap, he came home a year later – minus a leg – thoroughly embittered and never politically active again. Dropped out of sight.

I really do feel we readers would value a more balanced approach than evident in the articles on Norman Bethune and the recent one on the Mac–Pap Battalion. You can be assured that the great bulk of the Canadians in that volunteer force were ardent Marxists fighting for the possibility of a Marxist (of Stalinist hue) state in the Iberian peninsula. No, they are not democrats. But very adept in the vocabulary chosen for the media: years ago we used to admire their PR adroitness – if not their ethics.

As for China and Norman Bethune, please note there were many doctors, nurses, teachers who worked for decades to help the Chinese people – no one gives a hoot about them now but Bethune is practically deified. It's overdone.

Admittedly good articles are never in rich abundance. But there is a wealth of insightful literature on the Spanish tragedy. Let's use it. Intense partisanship has had its day; it's good point/counterpoint we yearn for.

Jim Carson
Oakville, Ontario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A slight dislocation

In the map on page 15 of the April/May issue, you show Cape May in the north end of New Jersey. The last time I was in Cape May it was at the far southeast corner of the state. Has Cape May moved?

John P. Hamilton
via e-mail

Editor: No, it hasn't. Mr. Hamilton is correct.

More on Hall

There was an item by Ms. Miriam Guptill of Halifax, N.S. [Letters, February/March 1998] expressing her concern that the name of William Hall was not shown in the book *Our Bravest and Our Best,* by Arthur Bishop. I have not read or seen the book; however if the name of William Hall was not shown, the author is in error. Indeed Ms. Guptill is correct.

I have kept in my personal files a record of all Canadian gallantry awards (I'm bit of a medal buff) for many years now.

The V.C. ribbon was dark brown for naval recipients until 1918 with Able Seaman William Hall, RN, being the only Canadian V.C. winner to wear the blue ribbon. Prior to the South African War their were four V.C. winners: Alexander Robert Dunn, William Hall, Herbert Taylor Reade and Campbell Mellis Douglas.

I would like to point out though that there was one Frederick William Hall, who was among the 70 Canadians awarded the V.C. in World War I. Am not sure if Ms. Guptill is referring to this Hall or the first one mentioned.

William Hall was the second Canadian to receive this gallantry award following the one awarded to Alexander Robert Dunn.

All 94 Canadian winners of the V.C., with full citations, are recorded in *1000 Brave Canadians,* published by The Unitrade Press. Finally the Canadian holders of the V.C. are available from the *London Gazette.*

Perhaps the above may clarify the apparent slip by Arthur Bishop and help support Ms. Guptill's letter.

Carl H. Rollo
Copper Cliff, Ontario

A Creighton compliment

Late last week one of your Vancouver subscribers gave me a copy of the February/March 1998 issue drawing my attention to the article by Professor Emeritus P. B. Waite and the references in the last paragraph of Professor Bliss's review.

Donald Creighton was my uncle.

Earlier this week, a young cashier at my local supermarket handed my credit card back to me commenting that when she saw the name Creighton, particularly with an 'O', it reminded her of that "famous Canadian historian, Donald Creighton." The look of complete delight with which she greeted my acknowledgment that he was my uncle was worth many times over the cost of my purchases.

Professor Waite says that "Creighton had a scholar's passion for accuracy and a dramatist's urge to tell a good story." I say that Waite's Creighton is not only accurate, it is also a hell of a good story!

You might be interested to know that the marriage to Luella in 1926 while still an undergraduate at Oxford and the Paris/Balliol separation is the subject of a short story ("My Father Took a Cake To France") and the title of a book of short stories written by Donald's daughter, Cynthia (writing under the name Cynthia Flood and published by Talonbooks of Vancouver in 1992).

My thanks to Waite and *The Beaver* – oh yes, and to Uncle Donald too.

Denis W. H. Creighton
West Vancouver, British Columbia

P.S. Bliss was accurate, as well.

Editor's note: P.B. Waite's article, "Donald Creighton: Casting the Net of his Macdonald" [February/March 1998], was an edited version of the introduction to the University of Toronto Press's new edition of Creighton's *MacDonald.* Attribution of some material was inadvertently dropped. Waite, in his notes to the original introduction, states, "The most important [article on Creighton] is [the work of autobiographical fiction] by his daughter, Cynthia Creighton Flood, 'My Father Took a Cake to France' (*Malahat Review* 87, summer 1989)." Our apologies to Ms. Flood for this omission.

Rural fact

More and more, in small ways, and sometimes in large ways, it is apparent that we are losing our rural roots.

Example: page 54 of the February/March *Beaver.* That isn't an oxcart; it is a plain farm wagon. A cart has two wheels, a wagon has four, and a cart is usually pulled by one beast of burden.

Christine Pike
Waseca, Saskatchewan

A familial surprise

I have subscribed to *The Beaver* for about a decade and have always enjoyed reading about the people and events that have shaped Canada's history. Imagine my surprise then when I opened the February/March issue and found an article describing the life and untimely death of my uncle, Herrick Duggan.

The personal correspondence between family members, including letters to Herrick Duggan's younger sister Peg, my mother, were particularly interesting, as I had never before been aware of their existence. I can only assume that these letters were among my grandfather's papers that my mother bundled up and sent to the National Archives some time in the sixties.

Subsequent to the events described, my mother named her first two sons

after her lost brothers, Herrick and Kenneth. Sadly, like their predecessors, both died as young men, their promising careers cut short. The name Kenneth has reappeared in a later generation; the name Herrick has not.

By my reckoning, there are now 53 living descendants of G.H. Duggan, 13 of whom are in still in the Montreal area. None bear the Duggan name.

The tragic story of my uncle and the Great War has come alive for me as never before, thanks to Ron Hotchkiss and *The Beaver.*

Andrew K. Hugessen
Kirkland, Quebec

Postcards, please

I thoroughly enjoyed Ian McCulloch's article on World War I postcards ["The Postcard War"] in your April/May issue.

Postcards were the popular medium to record Canadian social history in the making. The range includes Royal visits (the Duke of Connaught in 1910, Edward Prince of Wales in 1919), immigration, the Winnipeg Strike, "sodbuster" farms on the prairies, old steamships and paddlewheelers, Yukon miners, the first stampedes and exhibitions, the Halifax Disaster, and trains – standing, running, and wrecked! Among my personal favourites are those black and white photographic postcards showing storefronts on the main streets (sometimes the only streets) of small towns, with horses and carts out front, and ladies wearing heavy, long woollen dresses and wide hats in the heat of the day.

If any readers have such cards (or any other early postcards dating prior to 1930) "bundled ... at the bottom of a trunk in the attic" or anywhere else in the house or barn, and would like to sell them at a fair price, I'd be delighted to purchase them!

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GUEST COLUMN — Steve Hewitt

"The Force asked too much of me."

After 125 years, we need more contemplation and less celebration

The Musical Ride: largely an artifact R-34

As we sat in his senior's apartment, these words of a retired mounted policeman were accompanied by a misting of his eyes. I had asked him a hypothetical question: If you had to do it all over again, would you? His response and the accompanying emotion made it clear that he would not. How could this be? After all, through 125 years, various chroniclers of the Mounted Police have repeatedly regaled the reader with tales of the exciting and noble lives of the Mounties, including their adventures, their horses, and the dastardly criminals they captured. The only item missing in these portraits has been the people. Oh, there have been caricatures aplenty, but little about the rank-and-file members of the Force or those whom they policed. A major piece of the story has been ignored.

It is not just the majority of the people who are missing. So are the last 80 years. Little of the history of the Mounted Police pertains to this century. The Mounties have seemingly emerged from one of those time capsules that are occasionally buried and then disinterred a century later. The Musical Ride, the Great March West, the 1885 Northwest Rebellion, and the Boer War are largely the artifacts of another century. Take the Musical Ride, which will be travelling around Canada this summer. When was the last time a Mountie actually used a horse during police work? A more fitting representation of the twentieth-century Mounties would see a Musical Drive, with police cars performing intricate manoeuvres, all to the beat of the latest rock hits. With the Force about to enter the twenty-first century, much of its history has yet to make the journey into the current one.

This stunning imbalance in the portrayal of the Mounted Police can be explained by a visit to the history section of the nearest bookstore (for those of you with less energy, turn to History Television). Observe the dominance of books connected with World War II, an era in which there were no grey shadings – only good and evil. The same principle applies to the Men in Scarlet. The nineteenth century lacked the Mountie scourges of the twentieth. No Regina Riot; no smell of smoke from a barn burning; nothing comparable to the McDonald Commission; no words to match the significance of Air India and Brian Mulroney. In numerous ways,

the RCMP image has been tarnished in the twentieth century. And yet this is unfair since the image that is being smudged is largely a caricature. In his intriguing study of the Mounted Police contingent at Fort Battleford in the nineteenth century, Walter Hildebrandt warns that "[the] myth of the Mounties needs to be balanced off against the historical evidence that shows them to be no more and no less than men of their times, who carried the cultural baggage of the Victorian era they were part of. They are not and should not remain above history." These words are still relevant in this anniversary year. Members of the Mounted Police have never been any better or worse than their general public origins. The red in their uniforms does not signify supermen. Instead they have had their share of incompetents, sycophants, crooks, dunces, bigots, thugs, and even murderers.

Mountie fallibility has led to minor and major foul-ups. Too often, these have been ignored, or when analyzed, done so in a superficial or self-serving manner. Future Commissioner Stuart Taylor Wood's lesson from the 1935 Regina Riot, an event precipitated by his foolish order to arrest the leaders of the "On to Ottawa Trek" (consisting of 1,000 strikers from unemployment relief camps), was that the Mounted Police required gas grenades that would explode on contact to prevent them from being hurled back at the police. Despite having triggered violent episodes in Regina and earlier in Saskatoon, Wood's career continued to advance; he reached the top position in 1938.

Selective memory is not just a characteristic of members of the RCMP leadership. Historians, largely of the popular variety, have indirectly (and sometimes directly) aided the RCMP in perpetuating the safe and sanitized nineteenth-century images of the horsemen that are so familiar – and so reassuring. Such emphases have led to exclusions. For example, there will likely be no remembrance this year of the history of the RCMP Security Service, a branch that was discredited in the 1970s before being disbanded in 1984. In fact, the Security Service appears in much of the literature as an aberration, the equivalent of an evil twin who is better off locked away in the attic and forgotten. With the birth of the modern Mounted Police in 1920, however, the Security Service and RCMP were as interlocked as Siamese twins. That connection continued over the subsequent decades: Mountie members of the Security Service always joined after having trained and served in the regular wing of the Force.

Ultimately such points are irrelevant to most of the Canadian public. After 125 years, they know their Mounties, and they know that the horsemen are good people. Hence the strong opposition to a Sikh-Canadian being allowed to replace an important part of the Mountie image, the hat (albeit one based on an American model). On the other hand, the RCMP leadership seems to have escaped unscathed from widespread public scrutiny over another recent decision: the selling of marketing rights to the American conglomerate, the Walt Disney Corporation. Generations of researchers, who are now required to obtain permission from Disney to use the RCMP photos recently transferred to the National Archives of Canada, will not be so keen to forget.

The legal control of the copyright of the Mountie image by a large, impersonal corporation is in a sense an ironic reflection of the official RCMP story that has been constructed over 125 years. Hopefully, but not likely, in this anniversary year time will be found for a broader contemplation of the impact the Mounted Police have had on the lives of many Canadians.

Here are three stories that you probably won't come across as part of the hoopla.

Jeanne Corbin, an Alberta Communist, wanted to be a schoolteacher. That career ended in 1928 when the RCMP, fearing the impact that she might have on her students, informed the Alberta government of her radicalism; she was eventually dismissed, probably without ever knowing of the RCMP's role in that decision.

William Mulhall was a Mountie sergeant who served at Estevan in 1931 during a contentious mining strike. Mulhall sought to preserve order between two hostile factions, labour and ownership. In trying to be neutral, he alienated some of the powerful mine owners who complained about the police effort. One who listened to the critics was Commissioner J.H. MacBrien. He "advised" that more effort be put on protecting mine-company property. RCMP resources were split, leaving a smaller group of Mounties in Estevan on September 29, 1931 to face a group of parading miners. When a clash occurred, three miners lay dead as a result. Mulhall, his worst fear realized, found his career stagnated. (MacBrien, on the other hand, continued as commissioner. Two weeks after the riot in Estevan, he requested that the Canadian military send 300 bayonets, a bayonet instructor, and thousands of rifle bullets to the RCMP barracks in Regina; the materials were to be used as part of training.)

Finally, there is the sad lament of a retired Mountie that serves as the title for this piece. Like thousands of other rank-and-file members, he did nothing extraordinary; his was simply a story of perseverance. He, Mulhall, and Corbin stand as reminders that the more celebrated the myth, the more the casualties that lie in its wake. ◆

Steve Hewitt is currently working on a history of RCMP activities on the campuses of Canadian universities. He completed his dissertation on the early twentieth-century history of the Force in June 1997.

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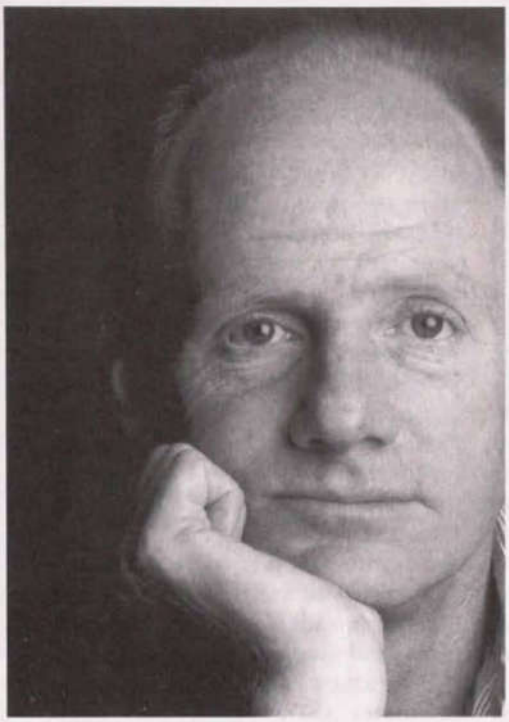
Christopher Moore

John Ralston Saul: Reforming Canada's History



JOHN FOLEY / OPALE

One night last winter, the literary organization PEN Canada sponsored a "Freedom to Read" event in Toronto, featuring a bevy of writers reading from significant works that had been censored or suppressed. Novelist and essayist John Ralston Saul announced when his turn on the podium came that he would read a speech whose author had been threatened with death if he tried to deliver it – right here in Toronto. Saul launched into words spoken in Montreal and then in the House of Commons by a future prime minister, Wilfrid Laurier.

Laurier made these speeches, Saul explained, after the defeat of the Métis uprising of 1885 and the hanging of Louis Riel. The most famous phrase in them, Laurier's declaration that "had I been born on the banks of the Saskatchewan, I would myself have shouldered a musket to fight," had prompted the death threats from enraged Torontonians. Yet in Saul's reading, Laurier's views mostly seemed moderate, judicious, and contemporary. Laurier had appealed not for Riel's acquittal, but for clemency. He argued against a policy rooted in vengeance, on the grounds that the Canadian state itself had to bear much of the blame for provoking decent people into rebellion. Mercy, not naked force, should be the first step to reconciliation, Laurier urged. What Saul read that night was an impressive argument for government by discussion, for restraint in the use of power, and for respect of the minor and the marginal in any society.

I thought then that John Ralston Saul's brief reading marked perhaps the first time in this century that a piece of nineteenth-century Canadian political oratory had been quoted seriously. A few weeks later, I encountered Saul again. The 150th anniversary of March 11, 1848, the swearing in of the LaFontaine-Baldwin ministry, was looming. In the opinion pages of the newspaper, Saul was lamenting that no one knew or cared about the events of this date, which he called "the anniversary of Canadian democracy" and "the determining act in the Canadian experience."

I began to realize we had a writer in Canada who took our traditions of parliamentary democracy seriously, indeed put them at the centre of the Canadian experience. This seemed wholly out of keeping with most Canadian historical thinking of the last fifty years, but I had been developing somewhat similar suspicions in my own recent work. I decided to go talk to John Ralston Saul.

Saul, who has recently turned fifty, has a doctorate in modern French history. He worked for a time as an aide to the well-connected businessman and public servant Maurice Strong, but he first became known as a novelist – better known in France than his native Canada, perhaps. In the 1990s, he began attracting wide attention with his "philosophical trilogy," *Voltaire's Bastards, The Doubter's Companion,* and *The Unconscious Civilization.* Then, on the heels of international acclaim for these essays about the root assumptions of western culture, he produced *Reflections of a Siamese Twin.* Subtitled *Canada at the end of the twentieth century, Reflections* argues that today's Canadians need to take seriously the words and ideas of our nineteenth-century politicians – not only Wilfrid Laurier, but also Louis-Hippolyte LaFontaine, and even Robert "Responsible-Government" Baldwin, long shunned and feared as the very personification of all that is boring about Canadian history.

"I do take it very seriously," Saul said instantly, when I brought up his advocacy of that tradition. "I think that Laurier speech, unless there is one I don't know of, is the finest political speech ever given in Canada. It made him prime minister. He didn't make the speech to become prime minister; he made it as an honest man. But the way that speech insisted that politics had to be about the larger public good marked him as a potential prime minister."

For Saul, the speech helps root Laurier in a Canadian political tradition that runs back to the 1820s, an indigenous movement for democratic reform. "And the Baldwin and LaFontaine speeches of the 1840s are in the same class. They are very moving, very modern. They were inventing something new in the world when they were inventing that new political regime in Canada in the 1840s."

Saul insists these speeches are not just good prose. He thinks the nineteenth century reform tradition contains the essence of Canadian public virtues: moderation, government by discussion, French-English cooperation, and progressive public action. Above all, they express a parliamentary tradition, summed up in the moment

Canada is the most intellectually conceived nation in the western world.

in 1848 when the Queen's appointed governors acknowledged that henceforth they would accept the "advice" given them by governments answerable to elected Canadian legislatures.

"March 11, 1848 is the backbone of the whole movement," says Saul. "Right through to Laurier's day, even in Laurier's speeches between 1917 and his death, when they woke up in the morning, the ideas they were thinking about, the reference point, was Baldwin and LaFontaine. It all gelled in 1848 on the platform Baldwin and LaFontaine put together. ... In their imaginations, to the end of the nineteenth century, this was the deal that mattered."

Why has Saul taken up these issues now, seemingly reversing the migration of his books toward international themes? "My books tend to be a sudden response to ideas that have been developing for 15 years," he says. But he admits the Quebec referendum of 1995 galvanized him. "Even if it only moved one reader, now was the time I had to say my piece if I ever was going to say it at all."

Saul believes deeply that Canada is indeed Siamese twins, that the idea of Canada is deeply rooted in the partnership of French and English. He thinks that partnership was incarnated in Baldwin and LaFontaine – and threatened by "Orangemen and ultramontanes," who were each more true to their own bloc than to the nation. Much of *Reflections of a Siamese Twin* is a sustained attack on the separatist ideologies which deny that French Quebec has anything in common with English Canada. (The book will appear in French this fall, and Saul, who denounces Canadian intellectuals who do not bother to learn French, expects to speak as frequently in Quebec as he has in English Canada.)

But Saul has another bugbear in the late twentieth-century version of reform – the neoconservative version of globalization, corporate power, and what Saul calls "false populism," based on such techniques as referendums. For Saul, the use of referendum politics by Parizeau and Bouchard is mirrored in appeals to direct democracy by neoconservative English Canadians. Referendum politics, says Saul in his book, "does not smooth the way but instead divides the population, creating and leaving bitterness and unresolvable emotion. The referendum permitted the framing of public questions in the context of good and evil, right and wrong, us versus them. In this context the leader becomes the people." This kind of "reform," Saul argues, fuels the resurgence of a new Family Compact of corporate elites who secure their own power by manipulating public emotions into simple questions and limited choices.

For this complex, diverse country, Saul prefers representative democracy, "centred on ideas of balance, equilibrium, and progress through continuity." Seeking a model for such ideas, he celebrates their nineteenth-century exponents, whom he sees as both deeply democratic and deeply Canadian. "The point of representative democracy is that it is long, and complicated, and messy. It is about talking. I get impatient with these complaints that 'It's all talk, something has to be done.' Democracy is *about* talking, it is about listening respectfully to various voices, about trying to accommodate different communities. That's what they worked hard at from 1820, and then you see the second generation, like young Robert Baldwin, take up the project. When you see LaFontaine's great speech to the Electors of Terrebonne, or Baldwin's to the Electors of York in 1841, they are deeply rooted in an indigenous Canadian tradition in French Canada and in English Canada. As a nationalist, Baldwin makes no mention of Britain, of the British tradition that is supposedly dominant."

Saul is annoyed by historians, both left and right, who have long dismissed nineteenth-century Canadian politics as hopelessly colonial, elitist, antidemocratic, and, above all, utterly without philosophy or vision. "The key is not, as Donald Creighton or Abbé Groulx would say, that 1848 was an accident. It was a conscious intellectual idea. Canada is the most intellectually conceived nation in the western world. It is a product of a set of ideas of how to live together in a community, and Responsible Government is the shorthand way they described that set of ideas."

Saul thinks all societies are built on agreements derived from experience. "We can and should ask what is the nature of the societal project. Other countries certainly do. In the United States, in France certainly, current projects are routinely assessed against societal experiences and agreements that may go back hundreds of years, to the Constitution or to what Napoleon did in a given field. In Canada, on the other hand, we pretend we are inventing it every day."

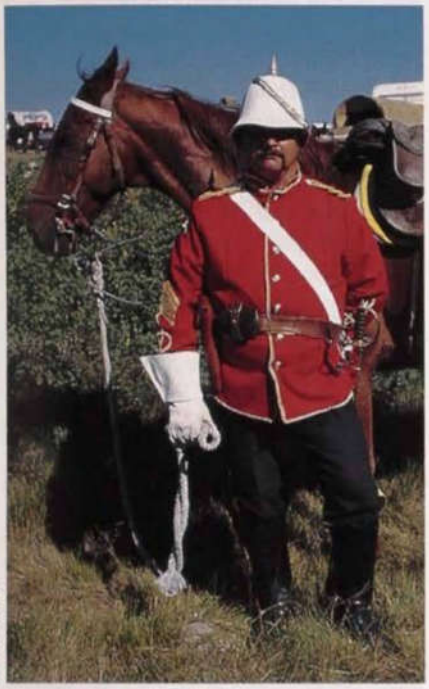
Saul thinks Canada's project can be identified, and it is where his historical and contemporary commitments mesh. "I declare that Canada was born on the humane, progressive ideology of Baldwin and LaFontaine, and that there never has been, never can be, any viable federal project on an antiprogressive platform. When we follow an antiprogressive ideology, the result is always a disaster for Canada."

Does anyone care? "People know, people care. Since the fall I have made 25 speeches to 14,000 people, and there would have been over 20,000 if the halls had been bigger. And I talk for 90 minutes, it's serious stuff. People care enough to listen."

Saul's audience extends even beyond that. Two days after his *Globe and Mail* opinion piece about the lost legacy of 1848, the Canadian government organized a hasty commemoration on March 11, 1998. Both Jean Chretien and Preston Manning attended.

From a writer, to his audiences, to his political leaders. Perhaps even the historians will begin to take note. ◆

***Reflections of a Siamese Twin: Canada at the End of the Twentieth Century* by John Ralston Saul, was published by Viking in 1997.**



ELAINE KENNEY

Queen's Cowboy Rick Stanick. The Queen's Cowboys headed up the 1997 wagon trek dressed in authentic replicas of the gold-trimmed red tunics of the first NWMP.

Pioneer adventure recreates historic treks

Shouts of "Wagons Ho" will resound across the prairies as wagons and outriders start off on the eighth consecutive expedition of the Boundary Commission and North-West Mounted Police Trail and Wagon Trek. The ride, which reenacts the treks west of the Boundary Commission surveyors and the NWMP of the 1870s, originated at Fort Dufferin, Manitoba in 1991. Each summer since, it has progressed along the historic route. This year's ride, which starts from Etzikom, Alberta and finishes at Fort Macleod, is the final leg of the eight-year event.

The history of the Boundary Commission and the NWMP is intricately woven into our Canadian fabric; both organizations played dominant roles in the formation of this country. The

MUSEUM PROFILE

The Provincial Museum of Alberta, a 1967 Canadian Centennial project, is one of Canada's most popular museums, attracting over 300,000 visitors annually. Situated in a park just west of downtown, the Museum offers a full range of exhibitions and activities for every age level and interest. Permanent galleries feature displays of Alberta's natural and human history while feature exhibitions and events, ranging from small traveling displays to giant blockbuster spectaculars, are changing all the time. Behind the scenes, 12 curatorial programs manage a collection of over 2 million objects and specimens.

The **Syncrude Gallery of Aboriginal Culture** brings 11,000 years and 500 generations of history to life. This new, permanent exhibition, occupying a quarter of The Provincial Museum of Alberta, stands apart from any other in Canada. Recorded voices, film, light, over 3,000 artifacts, the latest computer technology, lifelike dioramas and Aboriginal interpreters bring a story of survival and triumph to life.

The internationally renowned **Habitat Gallery** recreates actual locations throughout Alberta. It's like taking a 40 minute hike around the forests, lakes, prairies and mountains of the Province and seeing the diverse wildlife that live here!

The **Natural History Gallery** packs a billion years into one visit. Spectacular minerals and gems, dinosaurs, sabre-toothed cats, and mammoth are waiting to be discovered. The **Bug Room** is unique in Western Canada and offers visitors the opportunity to meet some of the biggest insects in the world – alive and up close.

The Provincial Museum of Alberta
12845 – 102 Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta T5N 0M6

For information contact:
Telephone: (403) 453-9100 Website: <http://www.pma.edmonton.ab.ca>

MUSEUM DISCOUNTS

Membership in Canada's National History Society provides reduced admission to the following leading Canadian museums:

- Royal British Columbia Museum, Victoria
- Vancouver Museum
- Vancouver Maritime Museum
- Whyte Museum of the Canadian Rockies, Banff, Alberta
- Glenbow Museum, Calgary
- Provincial Museum of Alberta, Edmonton
- Saskatchewan Western Development Museum, Saskatoon, Moose Jaw, North Battleford, Yorkton
- Dalnavert Museum, Winnipeg
- Manitoba Museum of Man and Nature, Winnipeg
- Western Canada Aviation Museum, Winnipeg
- McCord Museum of Canadian History, Montreal
- Pointe à Callière, Musée d'archéologie et d'histoire de Montréal
- Canadian Museum of Civilization, Hull, QC
- New Brunswick Museum, Saint John
- Yarmouth County Museum, Yarmouth, NS

A discount of at least 10 percent on regular admission will be given upon presentation of your membership card. Some restrictions may apply. All subscribers to *The Beaver* are automatically members of the Society.

Canada's National History Society

Coming in August/September *The Beaver*

The Blessed Regions of Boothia Felix *by Stephen Bown*

Captain John Ross's Arctic voyage told through his art and words

Dreaming of Eden in the New Brunswick Bush: Holistic medicine and alternative health were hot topics in the 1860s. *by Joanne Findon*

The Sisters of St. Ann: In 1858, four young women from Quebec travelled to British Columbia via the Panama Canal – and founded a remarkable institution. *by Phil Jensen*

One *Strong* Canadian: A profile of Louis Cyr. *by C.H. Russell*

Plus Letters, Reviews, & more!

Jay Treaty of 1794 created the first International Boundary Commission. From that date, Canada and the U.S. appointed a series of temporary commissions to oversee boundary surveys, mapping, and maintenance. From 1872–1874, the Boundary Commission surveyed the 49th parallel between Canada and the U.S. Their role was to establish sovereignty in the West.

The Cypress Hills massacre of 1873, in which approximately 20 Assiniboine Indians were killed, was the incident that propelled Sir John A. Macdonald to create the NWMP. On July 8, 1874, the NWMP left Fort Dufferin and followed much of the same trail used by the Boundary Commission to bring law and order to the West. Before the arrival of the NWMP, the Canadian West abounded with whisky traders, outlaws, and gold seekers.

Back then, both surveyors and the NWMP faced hunger, thirst, buffalo stampedes, discontented Plains Indians, raging storms, and locusts, which could devour all available grass. Captain Anderson, a surveyor, described a buffalo stampede: "The buffalo extended over the plains for many miles, took fright and rushed toward us ... I was afraid our horses and wagons would be swept away, but we were able to stop in time, and thousands of the terrified buffalo swept past us just in front, smothering us with dust." Participants on this modern-day trek will likely experience far fewer hardships than these trailblazers of the 1870s.

Jim Crawford from Killarney, Manitoba conceived of the idea for the modern-day treks. "It was the historical element that got the idea going. It was to commemorate and remember the Boundary Commission, the NWMP, and the homesteaders who settled this land. We did a test ride in 1990 from Crystal City, Manitoba to Coulter Park – a distance of 120 miles – and covered it in six days, with 10 wagons and 21 outriders. It was such a success and people were so enthusiastic that it just carried on from year to year."

The ride has grown since then. Each year, local volunteers build on a wave of enthusiasm, hard work, and dedication to organize a segment of the trek which covers 100 to 120 miles. Marvin Bascum, trail boss for the 1997 ride, estimated that 750 people, 80 wagons, and more than 800 horses participated in last year's trek from Ravenscrag, Saskatchewan to Etzikom, Alberta.

Len Mitzel, trail boss for 1998, expects that 1,000 to 1,250 people will enroll for this year's ride. He adds, "The most important mandate of the organization is to keep the trek a family event, affordable and a family learning experience. By going on this trek, young people have the opportunity to learn about their history and geography first hand."

Highlights of the trek will include travelling through the Sweetgrass Hills, Milk River country, Writing-on-Stone Park, up the Fort Whoop-up Trail to Fort Whoop-up (Lethbridge), and on to historic Fort Macleod. Spectacular scenery is guaranteed, and the ride is billed as a real pioneer adventure. Participants on the trek can ride on horseback, travel by wagon, or walk. Hearty meals, of excellent quality, are catered at a cost of $45 a day for adults and $39 for children.

This year's ride will depart on July

RANDY KASPRICK

Hudson Bay mural completed in Kenora

Kenora, near the Manitoba/Ontario border, was once a bustling centre for the fur trade. and an important trading site for the Hudson's Bay Company.

In 1997, a large mural was painted on the site of the original HBC building on Main Street to commemorate the fur-trading activity in the area (the building now houses a music store). The mural is the work of artist David Carty, a Kenora resident, who trained at the Nova Scotia School of Art and Design. Funding for the mural was provided by the HBC. This summer, more murals that reflect the history of the town and its residents are planned.

The mural is one of eleven completed to date facilitated by The Lake of the Woods Heritage Townscapes group, who have been working on the project since 1994. The group raises funds through a number of projects, and relies on the generosity of local businesses, Rotary Club, and the assistance of Abitibiti Consolidated and the Lake of the Woods Economic Development Corporation.

The committee is always looking for new artists and members. Please contact committee chairperson Pippi Johnson at <pippi@voyageur.ca>.

15th from Etzikom, Alberta and finish in Fort Macleod on July 24th. To register, or for more information on the Boundary Commission NWMP Trail and Wagon Trek, write to: Boundary Commission, c/o Chinook Country Tourist Association, 2805 Scenic Drive S., Lethbridge, AB T1K 5B7; Tel: 1-800-661-1222 (operator #3); fax: (403) 329-6177; e-mail: <west@albertasouth.com>. You can also write or call Len Mitzel, trail boss for this year's ride: Box 563, Etzikom, AB T0K 0W0; Tel: (403) 666-3915; fax: (403) 666-2002; e-mail <lwmitzel@telusplanet.net>.

– *Elaine Kenney*

❁ ❁ ❁

MANITOBA MUSEUM OF MAN AND NATURE, 6270

C-516

Siksika or Blackfoot cowboys from Siksika, Alberta

Cowboy exhibit a first

The Canadian Museum of Civilization, in Hull, Quebec, celebrates the cowboy culture of Canada's First Nations in *Legends of Our Times: Native Ranching and Rodeo Life on the Plains and Plateau*. The exhibit, which opens June 19 and continues until January 2, 2000, is mounted in the Museum's First Peoples' Hall.

Legends of Our Times is the first exhibit to take an in-depth look at the history of the native cowboy. The culmination of over five years of extensive research, it features hundreds of photos and artifacts, which trace the history of the aboriginal peoples as buffalo hunters, horsemen, ranchers, cowboys, and rodeo entertainers. The exhibit is slated to tour Canada, the U.S., and Europe following its stay at CMC. A book on the exhibit, by curators Morgan Baillargeon and Leslie Tepper, will also be released in June.

❁ ❁ ❁

RCMP commemorates its anniversary

Throughout Canada, the RCMP is celebrating its 125th anniversary. Special activities, including the Musical Ride, will be publicized in local communities. Some celebrations have historical interest.

The Mounted Police Tattoo, to be held in Regina from June 25–28, features a reenactment of the March West, complete with police recruits, Métis scouts, supply wagons, and Red River carts; it concludes with a dramatization of a meeting between Col. Macleod and Chief Crowfoot. Participants in the mounted arms competition will engage in centuries-old battlefield skills, using revolvers, lances, and swords. Sponsored by the Friends of the Mounted Police Museum, the celebration culminates with a performance of the renowned Musical Ride.

RCMP in Halifax will hold their Nova Scotia International Tattoo from July 1–7, which also features historical events. The town of Fort Steele, B.C. is focusing its celebrations on the rebuilt officers' quarters for the first NWMP detachment in B.C. The restoration effort is continuing with other buildings.

❁ ❁ ❁

Community celebrates its centennial

"The Atlin, British Columbia gold strike was one of the largest in the Northwest," writes *Beaver* reader J.V. Brister, something few people know. Soon after miners Fritz Miller and Kenneth McLaren discovered gold in Pine Creek in 1898, thousands of gold seekers heading to the Yukon changed their course and stopped at Atlin. The 500-person community, located in the northwest corner of the province, is known for its beautiful alpine setting on Atlin Lake. This summer it marks its 100th birthday with the Atlin Gold Rush Centennial Celebrations, which includes a special high tea on the restored lake vessel, the M.V. *Tarahne*, and various exhibits and events. The Atlin Historical Society's main centennial project is the restoration of the turn-of-the century Globe Theatre. This multipurpose building, which will be equipped for live theatre, film, and community activities, will celebrate its opening August 1.

The Atlin Historical Society has kept the town's history alive through the Atlin Historical Museum (housed in the old Atlin School), and the restoration of various historical buildings, including the Court House and gold-rush log cabins. For further information on centennial events, contact the Society at P.O. Box 111, Atlin, BC V0W 1A0, tel. (250) 651-7522.

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by J.L. Granatstein
Publisher's List Price $20.
Club Price **$14.** (paper)

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by Michael Bliss
Publisher's List Price $19.99
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NATIONAL PARKS OF CANADA
by Kevin McNamee
with a foreword by David Suzuki
Publisher's List Price $45.
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A NATION TOO GOOD TO LOSE
by Joe Clark
Publisher's List Price $16.95
Club Price **$10.** (paper)

SCRUM WARS: The Prime Ministers and the Media
by Allan Levine
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RIGHT HONOURABLE MEN
by Michael Bliss
Publisher's List Price $28.
Club Price **$15.** (cloth)

Order today!
See the Beaver Book Club ad on the inside front cover

THE SOCIETY

Visit Dalnavert

The elegant house of Sir John A. Macdonald's son is the newest member of Canada's National History Society's admission discount program, which includes museums across Canada.

Beautiful and fascinating, Dalnavert was built in what is now downtown Winnipeg for Hugh John MacDonald, a former premier of Manitoba and son of Sir John A. It was fully restored in the mid-1970s by the Manitoba Historical Society. Through meticulous research and judicious acquisitions, the home has been furnished to reflect the lifestyle of a well-to-do Victorian household. The home/museum was designated a national historic site in 1991.

There are now 15 museums across Canada participating in the Society's discount program. A complete list of them can be found in the Museum Profile on page 53.

DOUG DEALEY

1898 Edison phonograph in Dalnavert's parlour, with Sèvres porcelain urn in the background

In the Works

The Society is arranging a modest conference on "learning history" to be held in late June in Ottawa. It will be by invitation only to some 40 to 60 stakeholders in the business and teaching of history, including governments, teachers, researchers, materials producers, private societies, and foundations. The conference will explore the ways, means, and difficulties associated with the learning of history by Canadians; and the basic premise that there is a lot of teaching of history going on, but not a lot of learning taking place. It will serve as a prelude, or preparatory event, to a major public conference on history to be held in January 1999, in Montreal, in conjunction with the McGill Institute for the Study of Canada.

At a two-day workshop held in March, 1997, the Board of the Society developed a strategy to govern its future thrust and direction toward its mission to "promote greater popular interest in Canadian history." In addition to publishing and outreach ventures, the Society felt it could also bring history to a wider audience by taking the lead in promoting history through such things as an annual conference on a history topic.

You are invited to visit the Society's website at:
<http://www.cyberspc.mb.ca/~otmw/cnhs/cnhs.html>

Thank You

Once again, the Society wishes to acknowledge and thank the Hudson's Bay History Foundation for its generous support. The Society has received a grant from the Foundation for the last five years and provides a major source of operating revenue for the organization.

The Hudson's Bay History Foundation was established in 1994 as a result of gifts by The Bay to the province of Manitoba of its corporate archives and museum collection. The Foundation ensures funding for the future care and management of these gifts and also provides support to the Society.

Thank you, too

The Society has received grants from the T.R. Meighen Foundation of St. Andrews, NB, and the Molson Foundation of Montreal, in support of the Governor General's Award for Excellence in Teaching Canadian History. The grants were for $20,000 each.

The Society is grateful for this support and the endorsement it offers one of the Society's principal activities – recognizing Canada's best history teachers.

Canada's National History Society

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HISTORY™ TELEVISION

IT'S ABOUT TIME.™

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS FOR SUMMER '98

HISTORY ON FILM

Wednesday - Saturday nights at 9 ET/PT

Four nights a week, veteran journalist Ann Medina hosts History Television's presentation of high-quality, historically-based feature films. Upcoming highlights include *The Falcon and The Snowman (June 20 and 26), To Kill A Mockingbird (July 4), A Bridge Too Far (July 18 and 24), Missing (August 6)* and *Night of the Generals (August 8 and 14).*

IT SEEMS LIKE YESTERDAY

Weeknights at 7:30 ET/4:30 PT

Rick Mercer (*This Hour Has 22 Minutes*) puts his own spin on the past. Each episode examines a week in time – we witness the events and trends that seized the public's attention. The show covers everything from politics to pop culture, show business to sports.

HISTORY PRESENTS

Monday nights at 9 ET/PT

History Presents is the weekly showcase for high quality, award-winning documentaries from around the world. Programs are primarily geared to important calendar events and significant anniversaries.

CANADA DAY

To celebrate Canada Day, History Television presents a full day of Canadian history. Highlights include the beautiful documentary *Enchanted Summers: The Grand Hotels of Muskoka; Tommy Douglas: In His Own Words*; and *Our House*, a special about the history of our House of Commons based on a unique presentation by the Speaker, the Honourable Gilbert Parent.

NEW PROGRAMS FOR SUMMER '98

DESTINATION: HISTORY

Weeknights at 8 ET/5 PT

A daily trip around the world for armchair time travelers. Weeknights starting June 15th, History Television features fascinating and entertaining programs that let you escape to the past. Programs include:

Great Wonders of the World - Visit the world's most spectacular historic landmarks including Stonehenge, the Great Wall of China, the Amazon River, and the Eiffel Tower.

Ancient Civilizations - Explore the ancient beliefs and customs that have shaped our modern world. This program features beautiful footage and fascinating findings from archeological sites around the world.

Witness to Yesterday - The return of one of Canada's most distinguished television series. Lively, probing and dramatic dialogues between host Patrick Watson and the world's most exciting historical figures, brought to life by well known Canadian and international stars.

ADVENTURE SUNDAYS

Sunday nights starting at 7 ET/6 PT

Sunday nights are filled with swashbuckling adventures including:

Pirate Tales - Roger Daltrey hosts a weekly exploration of the golden era of this cut-throat trade.

Shogun - The classic mini-series with Richard Chamberlain returns to History Television.

Sharpe - One of History Television's most popular series. Follow the swashbuckling exploits of Major Richard Sharpe in 19th century Spain.

The Untouchables - Classic '60s series starring Robert Stack

HISTORY™ TELEVISION

IT'S ABOUT TIME.™

SUMMER 1998 SCHEDULE

Eastern	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
8:00AM	Sketches of our Town					The Ascent of Man	Ancient Civilizations
8:30AM	Front Page Challenge						
9:00AM	Great Crimes and Trials of the 20th Century					Ancient Civilizations	Testament
9:30AM	It Seems Like Yesterday						
10:00AM	Drama Strip (Wish Me Luck, Colditz and Secret Army)					History Presents	Great Mansions of Europe
10:30AM							Great Wonders
11:00AM	Combat						World at War
11:30AM							
12:00PM	History Presents	The Fifties	History on Film	History on Film	History on Film	World at War	Century of Warfare
12:30PM							
1:00PM		POP!				Century of Warfare	History on Film
1:30PM						Great Mansions of Europe	
2:00PM	I, Claudius		Great Myths	Great Myths		Great Wonders	
2:30PM							
3:00PM	Ancient Civilizations	Historylands	Testament	Great Mansions of Europe	The Ascent of Man	I, Claudius	
3:30PM		Witness to Yesterday		Great Wonders			History on Film
4:00PM	Drama Strip (Wish Me Luck, Colditz and Secret Army)					POP!	
4:30PM							
5:00PM	Combat						
5:30PM							
6:00PM	Sketches of our Town					The Fifties	Historylands
6:30PM	Front Page Challenge						Witness to Yesterday
7:00PM	Great Crimes and Trials of the 20th Century					Great Mansions of Europe	The Untouchables
7:30PM	It Seems Like Yesterday					Great Wonders	
8:00PM	Ancient Civilizations	Historylands / Witness to Yesterday	Testament	Great Mansions of Europe / Great Wonders	The Ascent of Man	Historylands	Pirate Tales
8:30PM						Witness to Yesterday	
9:00PM	History Presents	The Fifties	History on Film	History on Film	History on Film	History on Film	Shogun/Sharpe
9:30PM							
10:00PM		POP!					
10:30PM							
11:00PM	I, Claudius		Great Myths	Great Myths			Pirate Tales
11:30PM							
12:00AM	History Presents	Historylands	History on Film	History on Film	History on Film	History on Film	Shogun/Sharpe
12:30AM		Witness to Yesterday					
1:00AM		POP!					
1:30AM							
2:00AM	I, Claudius		Great Myths	Great Myths			The Untouchables
2:30AM							
3:00AM	Combat					Great Myths	Shogun/Sharpe
3:30AM						A Scattering of Seeds	
4:00AM	Ancient Civilizations	The Fifties	Testament	Great Mansions of Europe	The Ascent of Man	Historylands	
4:30AM				Great Wonders		Witness to Yesterday	
5:00AM	Sketches of our Town					History on Film	Pirate Tales
5:30AM	Front Page Challenge						
6:00AM	Great Crimes and Trials of the 20th Century						Testament
6:30AM	It Seems Like Yesterday						
7:00AM	Drama Strip (Wish Me Luck, Colditz, and Secret Army)						The Untouchables
7:30AM							

Program changes may occur.

Destination: History

Adventure Sundays